

Malaysia, Singapore & Brunei

# Kuala Lumpur (Chapter)

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**Coverage includes:** Sights, Activities, Courses, Festivals & Events, Eating, Drinking, Entertainment and Shopping.

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# Kuala Lumpur

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## Best Places to Eat

- » Kedai Makanan Dan Minuman TKS (p66)
- » Rebung (p83)
- » Robson Heights (p83)
- » Frangipani (p66)
- » Sri Nirwana Maju (p83)

## Best Places to Stay

- » Villa Samadhi (p62)
- » The Courtyard (p62)
- » YY38 Hotel (p62)
- » BackHome (p61)
- » Reggae Mansion (p61)

## Why Go?

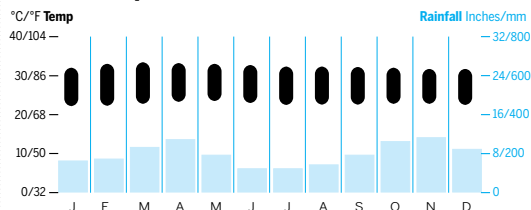
Less than two centuries since tin miners hacked a base out of the jungle, Kuala Lumpur (KL) has evolved into an affluent 21st-century metropolis remarkable for its cultural diversity. Ethnic Malays, Chinese prospectors, Indian migrants and British colonials all helped shape this city, and each group has left its indelible physical mark as well as a fascinating assortment of cultural traditions.

KL lacks much of an overall plan and has few obvious sights. Its quirky charm lies in historic temples and mosques rubbing shoulders with contemporary towers and shopping malls; traders' stalls piled high with pungent durians and counterfeit handbags; monorail cars zipping by lush jungle foliage; and locals sipping cappuccinos in wi-fi-enabled cafes or feasting on delicious streetside hawker food.

Eating and shopping are highlights, but when urban pressures begin to wear you down there are many easy day trips; see Selangor & Negeri Sembilan (p97) for details.

## When to Go

### Kuala Lumpur



### Jan & Feb

Enjoy the Chinese New Year and the dramatic Hindu festival Thaipusam.

### Mar & Apr

Catch the first of the city's general sales and the Malaysian Grand Prix.

### Aug & Sep

Enjoy Ramadan night markets across the city; celebrate Independence and Malaysia Day.

## History

In 1857 87 Chinese prospectors in search of tin landed at the apex of the Klang and Gombak Rivers and imaginatively named the place Kuala Lumpur, meaning 'muddy confluence'. Within a month all but 17 of the prospectors had died of malaria and other tropical diseases, but the tin they discovered in Ampang attracted more miners and KL quickly became a brawling, noisy, violent boomtown.

As in other parts of the Malay Peninsula, the local sultan appointed a proxy (known as Kapitan China) to bring the unruly Chinese fortune-seekers and their secret societies into line. The successful candidate Yap Ah Loy ('Kapitan China' from 1868 to 1885) took on the task with such ruthless relish that he's now credited as the founder of KL.

Yap had barely established control, however, when fighting broke out between local sultans for the throne of Perak. KL was swept up in the conflict and burnt to the ground in 1881. This allowed the British government representative Frank Swettenham to push through a radical new town plan that transferred the central government from Klang to KL. By 1886 a railway line linked KL to Klang; by 1887 several thousand brick buildings had been built; and in 1896 the city became the capital of the newly formed Federated Malay States.

After occupation by Japanese forces during WWII (when many Chinese were tortured and killed, and many Indians were sent to work on Burma's 'Death Railway'), the British temporarily returned, only to be ousted when Malaysia declared its independence in 1957.

KL's darkest hour came on 13 May 1969 when race riots – mainly between the Malays and Chinese communities – claimed hundreds, perhaps thousands, of lives. A year later local government elections were suspended – ever since, KL's mayor has been appointed by the Federal Territories Minister.

In 1974 the sultan of Selangor ceded the city's land to the state so it could officially become the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur. The city has prospered ever since as Malaysia's political and commercial capital.

## Sights

Apart from KL's major sights, be sure to also explore some of the city's eye-boggling shopping malls – all part of the essential KL experience.

## GOLDEN TRIANGLE

### Menara KL

OBSERVATION TOWER

(KL Tower; Map p68; ☎2020 5448; [www.kltower.com.my](http://www.kltower.com.my); 2 Jln Punchak; observation deck adult/child RM47/27, shuttle bus every 15 min free; ☉observation deck 9am-10pm, last tickets 9.30pm, shuttle bus 9am-9.30pm) The best view of KL is from atop this telecommunications tower, which sits amid the leafy surrounds of Bukit Nanas Forest Reserve. Avoid the touristy hoopla (including pony rides, an F1 race simulator and small aquarium) at the tower's base and head straight for the **observation deck** in the bulb at the top; its shape is inspired by a Malaysian spinning toy. One floor above is the revolving restaurant Atmosphere 360 (p67); having a meal here is likely the best deal. A **shuttle bus** runs up to the tower from the gate on Jln Punchak.

### Aquaria KLCC

AQUARIUM

(Map p68; ☎2333 1888; [www.klaquaria.com](http://www.klaquaria.com); concourse level, KL Convention Centre; adult/child aquarium RM45/35, aquarium & aquazone RM80/52; ☉11am-8pm) This impressive aquarium is in the basement of the KL Convention Centre. As well as tanks of colourful fish and touch-a-starfish-type activities, you can walk through a 90m-long underwater tunnel to view sinister-looking (but mostly harmless) sand tiger sharks and giant gopers.

### Bukit Nanas Forest Reserve

NATURE RESERVE

(Map p68; ☉7am-6pm) Rather than taking the shuttle bus to the base of Menara KL, climb the short and well-labelled nature trails through this lowland dipterocarp forest reserve; it gained protection in 1906 making it the oldest protected piece of jungle in Malaysia. There are good displays and leaflets in the **Forest Information Centre** (☎2026 4741; [www.forestry.gov.my](http://www.forestry.gov.my); Jln Raja Chulan; ☉9am-5pm) at the base of the hill.

### **FREE** Galeri Petronas

ART GALLERY

(Map p56; ☎2051 7770; [www.galeripetronas.com.my](http://www.galeripetronas.com.my); 3rd fl, Suria KLCC; ☉10am-8pm Tue-Sun) Swap consumerism for culture at this excellent art gallery showcasing contemporary photography and paintings. It's a bright, modern space with interesting, professionally curated shows that change every few months.

# Kuala Lumpur Highlights

1 Admire the glittering exterior of the **Petronas Towers** (p55), then head up to the observation deck

2 Day or night, bustling **Chinatown** (p51) is a dynamic place to eat, shop and people watch

3 Stand at KL's colonial heart on **Merdeka Square** (p52) surrounded by a handsome ensemble of heritage buildings

4 Spot all kinds of feathered beauties in **KL Bird Park** (p53), showpiece of the lush Lake Gardens

5 Admire beautiful objects gathered from around the Islamic world in the **Islamic Arts Museum** (p53)

6 Pay respects to the heavenly mother at the riotously colourful **Thean Hou Temple** (p58)

7 Dive into the streetside dining adventure of **Jln Alor** (p72)





See Titiwangsa Map (p59)

See Chow Kit, Kampung Baru & KLCC Map (p56)

See Jalan Tun Razak & Around Map (p63)

See Chinatown Map (p50)

See Golden Triangle Map (p68)

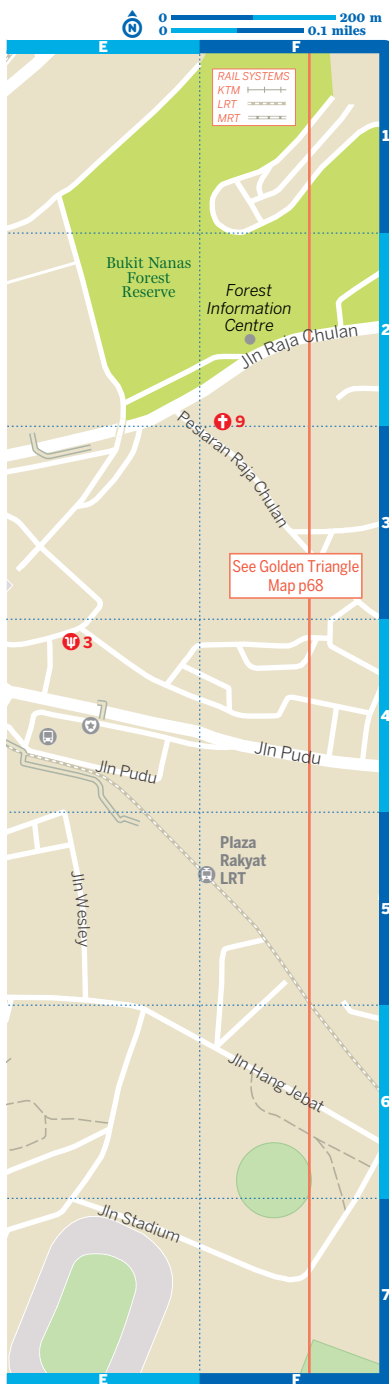
RAIL SYSTEMS  
KTM  
LRT  
MRT

## Chinatown

## KUALA LUMPUR SIGHTS







## Badan Warisan

### Malaysia

NOTABLE BUILDING

(Heritage of Malaysia Trust; Map p63; ☎2144 9273; [www.badanwarisan.org.my](http://www.badanwarisan.org.my); 2 Jln Stonor; ☀9am-5pm Mon-Sat) Find out about the work of this built heritage preservation society at its head office located in a 1925 colonial bungalow in the shadow of the Petronas Towers. The property's grounds contain the **Rumah Penghulu** (Map p63; suggested donation RM10; ☀tours 11am & 3pm Mon-Sat), a handsome example of a restored Malay-style wooden house from Kedah. The trust also holds exhibitions in the bungalow, where there's a gift store stocking books, wooden antique furniture and local handcrafted items.

### CHINATOWN, MERDEKA SQUARE & MASJID JAMEK

#### Jalan Petaling

MARKET

(Map p50; ☀10am-11pm) Chinatown's commercial heart is one of the most colourful and busiest shopping parades in KL, particularly at night when stalls cram the covered street. It offers everything from fresh fruit and cheap clothes and shoes to copies of brand-name watches and handbags, and pirated CDs and DVDs. Be prepared to bargain.

#### Sri Mahamariamman Temple

HINDU TEMPLE

(Map p50; 163 Jln Tun HS Lee; ☀6am-8.30pm) The oldest Hindu shrine in Malaysia was founded by migrant workers from the Indian state of Tamil Nadu in 1873. Flower-garland vendors crowd the entrance and the temple is crowned by a huge *gopuram* (temple tower) covered in riotously colourful statues of Hindu deities. Locals leave incense, flowers, coconuts and strings of limes as offerings to Mariamman, the south Indian mother goddess, an incarnation of Durga. An idol from the temple is paraded to Batu Caves in a silver chariot during Thaipusam (p571). Non-Hindus are welcome to visit, but leave your shoes at the entrance.

#### Masjid Jamek

MOSQUE

(Friday Mosque; Map p50; off Jln Tun Perak; ☀8.30am-12.30pm & 2.30-4pm Sat-Thu, 8.30-11am & 2.30-4pm Fri) Constructed in 1907 at the confluence of the Klang and Gombak Rivers, this beautiful onion-domed mosque is an island of serenity, with airy open pavilions shaded by palm trees. The designer was British architect AB Hubbock, who sought inspiration from the Mughal mosques of northern India. Visitors are welcome outside prayer times, but should dress appropriately.

## Chinatown

### Top Sights

Chinatown Wet Market .....	C5
Masjid Jamek .....	C3
National Textiles Museum .....	B3
Sri Mahamariamman Temple .....	C5
Sze Ya Temple .....	C4

### Sights

1 Bank Negara Malaysia Museum & Art Gallery .....	A1
2 Chan She Shu Yuen Temple .....	D7
3 Court Hill Ganesh Temple .....	E4
4 Jalan Petaling .....	C5
5 KL City Gallery .....	A3
6 Koon Yam (Guanyin) Temple .....	D7
7 Masjid Little India .....	C1
8 Merdeka Square .....	B3
9 St Andrew's Presbyterian Church .....	F2
10 St John's Cathedral .....	D2
11 Sultan Abdul Samad Building .....	B3

### Activities, Courses & Tours

12 C Woks Design .....	C4
13 Chin Woo Stadium .....	D6
14 Going Places Tours .....	D5

### Sleeping

15 5 Elements Hotel .....	D5
16 AnCasa Hotel & Spa Kuala Lumpur .....	D4
17 BackHome .....	D3

18 Explorers Guesthouse .....	C4
19 Hotel 1915 .....	C3
20 Hotel Lok Ann .....	D6
21 Reggae Mansion .....	C3
22 Wheelers Guest House .....	C5

### Eating

23 Ikan Panggang .....	D5
24 LOKL .....	D3
25 Madras Lane Hawkers .....	C5
26 Old China Café .....	C6
27 Precious .....	B4
28 Purple Cane Tea Restaurant .....	D7
29 Sangeetha .....	C3
30 Saravanaa Bhavan .....	C1
31 Sing Seng Nam .....	C3

### Drinking

32 Bar Art @ The Warehouse .....	C5
33 Moontree House .....	C6
Purple Cane Tea House .....	(see 33)
34 Reggae Bar .....	C5

### Entertainment

35 Doppel Kafe .....	B4
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### Shopping

Justin Yap .....	(see 36)
36 Peter Hoe Beyond .....	C5
37 Peter Hoe Evolution .....	C5

### Sze Ya Temple

CHINESE TEMPLE

(Map p50; Jln Tun HS Lee; ☉7am-5pm) This atmospheric Taoist temple was constructed in 1864 on the instructions of 'Kapitan China' Yap Ah Loy. You can see a statue of Yap just left of the main altar. Its odd position, squished between rows of shophouses, was determined by feng shui.

### Merdeka Square

SQUARE, PLAZA

(Map p50) The huge open square where Malaysian independence was declared in 1957 is ringed by heritage buildings and dominated by an enormous flagpole and fluttering Malaysian flag. In the British era, the square was used as a cricket pitch.

On the east side of the square is the fantasy-like **Sultan Abdul Samad Building** (Map p50; Jln Raja) with its distinctive copper-plated cupolas. This blend of Victorian, Moorish and Moghul architecture is typical of many of KL's colonial buildings. Designed by AC Norman (an associate of AB Hubbock, archi-

tect of the KL Train Station), it now houses the national Ministry of Information, Communications & Culture.

At the square's north end are low memorial arches inscribed with 'Dataran Merdeka' (Merdeka Square) and across the road is another of AC Norman's creations, **St Mary's Cathedral**, dating from 1894 and housing a fine pipe-organ dedicated to Sir Henry Gurney, the British high commissioner to Malaya. He was assassinated in 1951 during the Emergency.

To learn more about the history of the square and surrounding buildings drop into the **KL City Gallery** (Map p50; www.klcitygallery.com; Merdeka Square; ☉8am-6pm), which also has a giant scale model of the city, a tourist information desk and a good gift shop.

### National Textiles Museum

MUSEUM

(Muzium Tekstil Negara; Map p50; ☎2694 3457; www.jmm.gov.my; Jln Sultan Hishamuddin; ☉daily 9am-6pm) Four darkened exhibition spaces



## KUALA LUMPUR IN...

### Two Days

Breakfast at **Imbi Market** then head to the Kuala Lumpur City Centre (KLCC) to secure tickets up the **Petronas Towers** and explore the **Suria KLCC** mall. Alternatively, ascend **Menara KL** and get your bearings of the city from the revolving restaurant **Atmosphere 360**. Spend the afternoon at the **National Museum**. Go souvenir shopping at the **Central Market**, then explore **Chinatown**, ending up at **Jln Petaling** for food and the night market.

On day two explore Tun Abdul Razak Heritage Park (formerly known as the Lake Gardens Park), dropping by the **KL Bird Park** and the **Islamic Arts Museum**. Have afternoon tea in **Starhill Gallery**, go shopping at **Pavilion KL**, then trawl the night food stalls of **Jln Alor**.

### Three Days

There are great views of the city skyline from **Lake Titiwangsa**, where you can also visit the **National Visual Art Gallery**. Amble through the Malay area of Kampung Baru, then take a taxi to the splendid **Thean Hou Temple** close to where you can eat at **Robson Heights**. Check to see if there are concerts at the **Dewan Filharmonik Petronas** or **No Black Tie**. Grab a nightcap at **Palate Palette**.

help preserve the delicate textiles on display – there are some beautiful pieces and plenty of explanation of how they are made. The sad thing is that many of the time-consuming skills necessary for the production of such textiles are dying out, making these pieces increasingly rare. In the attached shop many batik pieces are sourced from Indonesia.

## LAKE GARDENS & BRICKFIELDS



### Islamic Arts Museum

MUSEUM

(Muzium Kesenian Islam Malaysia; Map p54; ☎2274 2020; www.iamm.org.my; Jln Lembah Perdana; adult/child RM12/6; ☀10am-6pm, restaurant closed Mon) This outstanding museum is home to one of best collections of Islamic decorative arts in the world. Aside from the quality of the exhibits, which include fabulous textiles, carpets, jewellery and calligraphy-inscribed pottery, the building itself is a stunner, with beautifully decorated domes and glazed tile-work. The gift shop stocks beautiful products from around the Islamic world.

### KL Bird Park

AVIARY

(Map p54; ☎2272 1010; www.klbirdpark.com; Jln Cenderawasih; adult/child RM48/38; ☀9am-6pm) This fabulous aviary brings together some 200 species of (mostly) Asian birds flying free beneath an enormous canopy. Star attractions include ostriches, hornbills, eagles, flamingos and parrots. It's worth getting to the park for feeding times (hornbills

11.30am, eagles 2.30pm) or the bird shows (12.30pm and 3.30pm), which feature plenty of parrot tricks to keep youngsters amused. The park's **Hornbill Restaurant** (Map p54; ☎2693 8086; mains RM40-60; ☀9am-8pm; 🍷) is also recommended.

### National Museum

MUSEUM

(Muzium Negara; Map p54; ☎2282 6255; www.muziumnegara.gov.my; Jln Damansara; adult/child RM5/2; ☀9am-6pm, tours 10am Mon-Thu & Sat in English, Tue & Thu in French, Thu in Japanese) A major renovation has resulted in four main galleries with interesting, well-organised displays: Early History, where you'll find the bones of Perak Man; Malay



## KUALA LUMPUR BY FOOT

Six-lane highways and flyovers slice up the city, and pavements are often cracked or nonexistent. Even so, the best way to get a feel for KL's vibrant atmosphere is to walk. The city centre is surprisingly compact – from Chinatown to Little India takes little more than 10 minutes on foot – and some sights are so close together that it's often quicker to walk than take public transport or grab a cab (which can easily become snarled in traffic and KL's tortuous one-way system).

## Lake Gardens & Brickfields

0 200 m  
0 0.1 miles

KUALA LUMPUR SIGHTS



Kingdoms, including the history of the Melaka; Colonial Era, from the Portuguese through to the Japanese occupation; and Malaysia Today, which charts the country's post-WWII development. There are more things to see outside, including a regularly changing exhibition (extra charge) and a couple of small free galleries: the **Orang Asli Craft Museum** and **Malay World Ethnology Museum**, which has good displays of batik and other fabrics.

Time your visit to coincide with one of the free tours given by enthusiastic volunteer guides. In the future you'll be able to access the museum from KL Sentral station, but for now the easiest way here is by taxi, the hop-on-hop-off bus or via the walkway over the highway south of the Lake Gardens.



### Tun Abdul Razak Heritage Park (Lake Gardens Park)

PARK

(Map p54; Jln Tembusu; ☀ daylight hours) This 70 hectare park, laid out during colonial times, is planted with a variety of native plants, trees and shrubs. In the middle is a good children's adventure playground and nearby is the sprawling lake for which the gardens are named. You can rent boats for RM6 per hour and watch t'ai chi practitioners in the early morning. At the northern end of the lake is the **National Monument** (Map p54; Jln Parlimen, Plaza Tugu Negara; ☀ 7am-6pm), a giant bronze sculpture created in 1966 by Felix de Weldon, the artist

## Lake Gardens & Brickfields

### Top Sights

Islamic Arts Museum .....	B2
KL Bird Park .....	A2
Masjid Negara .....	B2
National Museum .....	A2

### Sights

1 Butterfly Park .....	A1
2 Deer Park .....	A1
3 KL Train Station .....	B2
4 Majestic Hotel .....	B2
5 Malayan Railway Administration Building .....	B2
6 National Planetarium .....	B2
7 Sam Kow Tong Temple .....	B3
8 Taman Bunga Raya .....	A1
Taman Orkid .....	(see 8)

9 Tun Abdul Razak Heritage Park (Lake Gardens Park) .....	A2
10 Wei-Ling Gallery .....	B3

### Activities, Courses & Tours

11 Buddhist Maha Vihara .....	A4
12 Temple of Fine Arts .....	A4
YMCA .....	(see 14)

### Sleeping

13 Hilton Kuala Lumpur .....	A3
14 YMCA .....	B3

### Eating

Annalakshmi .....	(see 12)
15 Hornbill Restaurant .....	A2
16 Kompleks Makan Tanglin .....	B1
17 Vishalatchi .....	B3

responsible for Washington DC's Iwo Jima monument.

Other interesting sights in the park include the **Butterfly Park** (Taman Rama Rama; Map p54; ☎2693 4799; Jln Cenderawasih; adult/child RM18/9; ☀9am-6pm), opposite the KL Bird Park, the **National Planetarium** (Map p54; ☎2273 4303; www.angkasa.gov.my/planetarium; 53 Jln Perdana; gallery free, planetarium RM12/6; ☀9am-4.30pm Tue-Sun) and **Deer Park** (Taman Rusa & Kancil; Map p54; Jln Perdana; ☀10am-6pm, closed noon-2pm weekdays).

### Masjid Negara

MOSQUE

(National Mosque; Map p54; Jln Lembah Perdana; ☀9am-noon, 3-4pm & 5.30-6.30pm, closed Fri morning) The main place of worship for KL's Malay Muslim population is this gigantic mosque, inspired by Mecca's Grand Mosque. Its umbrella-like blue-tile roof has 18 points symbolising the 13 states of Malaysia and the five pillars of Islam. Rising above the mosque, a 74m-high minaret issues the call to prayer, which can be heard across Chinatown. Non-Muslims are welcome to visit outside prayer times but dress appropriately and remove your shoes before entering.

### Brickfields

NEIGHBOURHOOD

Major developments around KL Sentral station are transforming this traditionally Indian area. Finally, the monorail terminal has been connected to the train station via a new shopping and office complex. A ceremonial arch graces Jln Brickfields and a colourful fountain with sculpted elephants is at the junction with Jln Travers.

Dragons fly off the corners of the **Sam Kow Tong Temple** (Map p54; 16 Jln Thambapillai; ☀7am-5pm), just around the corner from the monorail terminus, making for a striking contrast with the soaring hotel towers above KL Sentral. Other interesting buildings to be seen here include the Temple of Fine Arts (p60) and Wei-Ling Gallery (p90).

### KL Train Station

HISTORIC BUILDING

(Map p54; Jln Sultan Hishamuddin) The British architect AB Hubbock's Moorish- and Moghul-inspired fantasy, Kuala Lumpur Station, dates from 1911. Sadly, the station is looking shabby and forlorn especially since KL Sentral took over most of its services. This said, it's still a visually handsome building and is best seen from the forecourt of the grand **Malayan Railway Administration Building** (Map p54; Jln Sultan Hishamuddin) opposite; step inside this building to admire the soaring central stairwell. An underpass



## GETTING TO THE LAKE GARDENS

The Lake Gardens can seem like an island of greenery cut off from the city by railway lines and highways. However, it is possible to walk here: take the pedestrian bridge across from the Central Market to Kompleks Dayabumi and then head south around the back of the post office to the underpass leading to the Masjid Negara. Another set of overhead pedestrian bridges lead into KL Station from where you can also walk up to the gardens.

Alternatively, the KL Hop-On Hop-Off Bus stops at Masjid Negara, KL Bird Park, the National Monument and the National Museum. Once in the Lake Gardens, taxi drivers will likely insist on charging RM15 to RM20 to cover the short distance back to the city and refuse to use the meter.

from here leads you across the busy highway to inside the station where KTM Komuter trains still stop.



### Urban Village

ARTS CENTRE

(☎2201 0306; www.urbanvillage.my; 25 Jln Abdullah, Bangsar Utama) It's difficult to categorise this 'creative entrepreneur hub' that provides working space for local talents from the worlds of art, music and fashion. If you have musical skills, it's possible to help out with their program to get kids into music and start a band. Various performances and talks happen here too and there's a shop selling some of the artists' work, including t-shirts.

## LITTLE INDIA, KAMPUNG BARU & CHOW KIT

### Petronas Towers

NOTABLE BUILDING

(Map p56; www.petroneastwintowers.com.my; Jln Ampang; adult/child RM80/30; ☀9am-9pm Tue-Sun) Headquarters of the national oil and gas company Petronas, the 88-storey steel clad twin towers, nearly 452m tall, epitomise contemporary KL. Resembling twin silver rockets plucked from an early episode of *Flash Gordon*, they are the perfect allegory for the meteoric rise of the city from tin miners' shanty town to space-age metropolis.

Designed by Argentinian architect Cesar Pelli, the twin towers' floor plan is based on

## Chow Kit, Kampung Baru & KLCC



## Chow Kit, Kampung Baru & KLCC

### Top Sights

Petronas Towers ..... E3

### Sights

1 Bazaar Baru Chow Kit ..... B2

Galeri Petronas ..... (see 20)

2 Kampung Baru Mosque ..... C2

3 Loke Mansion ..... B3

Petrosains ..... (see 20)

4 Tatt Khalsa Diwan Gurdwara ..... B2

### Sleeping

5 Frenz Hotel ..... A4

6 Hotel Maya ..... D3

7 Mandarin Oriental ..... E4

8 Tune Hotel ..... A3

### Eating

9 Capital Café ..... A4

10 Coliseum Café ..... A4

11 Ikan Bakar Berempah ..... C2

Little Penang Kafé ..... (see 20)

12 Sagar ..... B4

13 Thai-la ..... B4

14 Yut Kee ..... B4

### Drinking

15 Apartment Downtown ..... E3

16 Marketplace ..... E2

### Entertainment

17 Dewan Filharmonik Petronas ..... E3

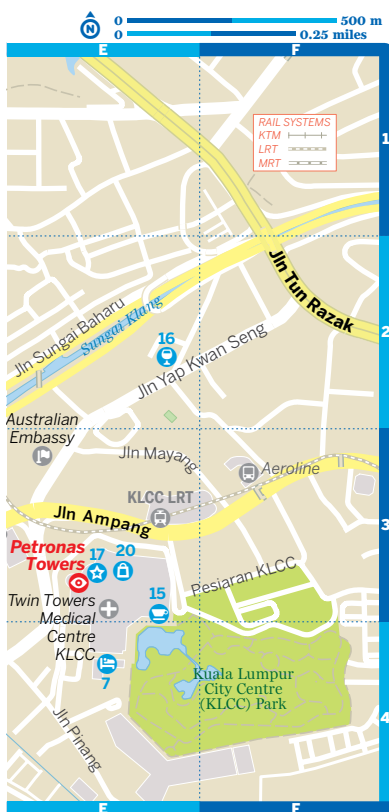
18 Saloma ..... D3

Tanjung Golden Village ..... (see 20)

19 Zouk Club ..... D3

### Shopping

20 Suria KLCC ..... E3



an eight-sided star that echoes arabesque patterns. Islamic influences are also evident in each tower's five tiers – representing the five pillars of Islam – and in the 63m masts that crown them, calling to mind the minarets of a mosque and the Star of Islam.

Get in line before 8am to be sure of securing one of the 960 tickets issued daily (half of which are sold in advance) for a guided 45-minute tour up to the 86th floor, including a 15-minute walk across the Skybridge connecting the towers to the 41st floor. The ticket office is in the tower basement at the KLCC.

### KLCC Park

PARK

(Map p68; ☀24hr, playground & paddling pool 10am-7.30pm Tue-Sat) Here you'll find a soft-surface jogging track, synchronised fountains, a fantastic (under 12s only) playground and paddling pool and – of course – great views of the Petronas Towers.

### Loke Mansion

HISTORIC BUILDING

(Map p56; ☎2691 0803; 273A Jln Medan Tuanku) Rescued from the brink of dereliction by the law firm Cheang & Ariff, Loke Mansion was once the home of self-made tin tycoon Loke Yew, although the original part of the structure was built in the 1860s by another rich merchant, Cheow Ah Yeok. The Japanese high command also set up base here in 1942. Access to the interior is by appointment only; admiring the beautifully restored, whitewashed exterior is free to all passersby.

### Kampung Baru

NEIGHBOURHOOD

Somehow this Malay area has managed to retain its sleepy village atmosphere in the midst of the city: traditional wooden houses stand amid leafy gardens and people go quietly about their daily lives – with the exception of Saturday night when a lively *pasar malam* (night market) takes over the area close to the Kampung Baru Light Rail Transit (LRT) station. Look out for the impressive **Tatt Khalsa Diwan Gurdwara** (Map p56; [www.tattkhalsa.org](http://www.tattkhalsa.org); 24 Jln Raja Alang), the largest Sikh temple in Southeast Asia and the **Kampung Baru Mosque** (Map p56; Jln Raja Alang), built in 1924, with its gateway decorated in beautiful glazed tiles. Explore the streets around here at the junction with Jln Daud to find many old wooden houses.

### Bank Negara Malaysia Museum & Art Gallery

MUSEUM, ART GALLERY

(Map p56; <http://museum.bnm.gov.my>; 2 Jln Dato Onn; ☀10am-6pm) The national bank's conservatively chosen, but attractive art collection is housed in a futuristic metal-clad complex (designed by top Malaysian architect Hijjas Kasturi) within walking distance of Bank Negara train station. Also here are exhibitions on the region's currency and Malaysia's economic history.

### Petrosains

MUSEUM

(Map p56; ☎2331 8181; [www.petrosains.com.my](http://www.petrosains.com.my); Level 4, Suria KLCC; adult/youth/child RM25/20/15; ☀9.30am-4pm Tue-Fri, 9.30am-5pm Sat & Sun) Fill an educational few hours at this interactive science discovery centre in Suria KLCC with all sorts of buttons to press and levers to pull. Many of the activities and displays focus on the wonderful things that petrol has brought to Malaysia – no prizes for guessing who sponsors the museum.

## WORTH A TRIP

## THEAN HOU TEMPLE

The multilayered and highly ornate **Thean Hou Temple** (Map p54; ☎2274 7088; [www.hainannet.com](http://www.hainannet.com); off Jln Syed Putra; ☀9am-6pm) is one of the most visually impressive in Malaysia. It's dedicated to the heavenly mother, Thean Hou. Her statue takes centre stage in the main hall, with Kuan Yin (the Buddhist goddess of mercy) on her right and Shuiwei Shengniang (the goddess of the waterfront) to her left. Statues of Milefo (the laughing Buddha), Weituo and Guandi further contribute to this Taoist-Buddhist hodgepodge.

There are great views from the temple's upper decks while at its base are tourist restaurants and shops. To reach the temple, 3km south of the centre of town, take either a taxi or the monorail to Tun Sambanthan station, cross Jln Syed Putra using the overpass and walk up the hill.

## TITIWANGSA

## Lake Titiwangsa

LAKE

(Map p59) For a picture-postcard view of the city skyline head to Lake Titiwangsa and the relaxing park that surrounds it. If you're feeling energetic, hire row boats, pedal boats and canoes (per hour from RM3) to glide across the lake, or go for a jog. The park is a favourite spot for courting Malaysian couples – and strict police on the lookout for improper behaviour!

Lake Titiwangsa is an 800m walk east of the Titiwangsa monorail station.

## National Visual Art Gallery

ART GALLERY

(Balai Seni Lukis Negara; Map p59; ☎4026 7000; [www.artgallery.org.my](http://www.artgallery.org.my); 2 Jln Temerloh; ☀10am-6pm) There are often interesting temporary shows of local and regional artists, as well as pieces from the gallery's permanent collection of 4000 works including paintings by Zulkifli Moh'd Dohalan, Wong Hoi Cheong, Ahad Osman and the renowned batik artist Chuah Than Teng. A new portrait gallery section was in the works during our latest visit. The interior is dominated by a swirly Guggenheim Museum-style staircase but overall you can't help feeling that so much more could be made of the place.

Next to the gallery is the theatre Istana Budaya (p88). Designed by Mohammed Kamar Ya'akub, the building's soaring roof is based on a traditional Malay floral decoration of betel leaves, while its footprint resembles a *wau bulan* (Malay moon kite).



## Activities

## Chin Woo Stadium

SWIMMING

(Map p50; ☎2072 4602; [www.chinwoo.org.my](http://www.chinwoo.org.my); Jln Hang Jebat; adult/child RM4/1.50; ☀2-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-8pm Sat & Sun) Great city views at this

50m outdoor pool. You must wear a proper swimsuit or swimming trunks.

## Lightworks

YOGA

(Map p68; ☎2143 2966; [www.lightworks.com.my](http://www.lightworks.com.my); 19 Jln Mesui) New Age centre that offers relaxing hatha yoga classes with an expat instructor. Drop-in classes are RM40 per session and are held at noon on Tuesday, and 7pm on Monday and Thursday.

## Kompleks Sukan Bangsar

SPORTS

(Map p84; Bangsar Sports Complex; ☎03-2284 6065; 3 Jln Terasek 3, Bangsar Baru; admission RM3; ☀9.30am-noon, 2-4.30pm, 6-8.30pm, closed Sun mornings) Home to a 25m pool, which can get crowded. Also has tennis courts, and squash and badminton facilities.

## Spa Village

SPA

(Map p68; ☎2782 9090; [www.spavillageresort.org](http://www.spavillageresort.org); 168 Jln Imbi, Ritz Carlton; ☀9am-9pm) Indoor and outdoor beauty and massage treatments, a sensory room and a second outdoor pool with waterfalls. Health club facilities include 24-hour fitness centre, sauna, steam room and whirlpool.

## Asianel Reflexology Spa

SPA

(Map p68; ☎2142 1397; [www.asianel.com](http://www.asianel.com); ☀10am-8pm) Upmarket massage and reflexology spa, one of several classy operations on the 'Pamper Floor' of Starhill Gallery.

## Reborn

MASSAGE, REFLEXOLOGY

(Map p68; ☎2144 1288; [www.reborn.com.my](http://www.reborn.com.my); 18 Jln Bukit Bintang; ☀11am-3am) One of the more pleasantly designed massage and reflexology joints along Jln Bukit Bintang, offering spa treatments as well as a fish spa.



## Titivangsa



### Courses

Check directly with each provider for prices and exact course times and details. Malay cooking courses are also offered by Rebung (p83) and Reggae Mansion (p61).



#### Rohani Jelani

COOKING

([www.rohanijelani.com/intro.htm](http://www.rohanijelani.com/intro.htm)) Learn to cook traditional Malaysian dishes in hands-on group classes run by friendly cookbook author Rohani Jelani in a beautiful countryside retreat where you can also stay the night. Each class ends with a sit-down meal of the dishes prepared that day.

#### LaZat Malaysian

##### Home Cooking Class

COOKING

(☎019-238 1198; [www.malaysia-klcookingclass.com](http://www.malaysia-klcookingclass.com)) The classes are held on Tuesday and Saturday mornings. Their location is a 25-minute drive from central KL. Check the website for the different menus on offer.

#### C Woks Design

BATIK

(Map p50; ☎012-257 2344; <http://batikcwook.blogspot.com>; Central Market Annexe; ☎10am-9pm) Paint your own batik panel from RM20. Either choose a readily prepared design or create your own. The C Woks team also have an outlet at Kompleks Budaya Kraf (p89).

#### School of Hard Knocks

ARTS & CRAFTS

(☎4145 6122; <http://visitorcentre.royalselangor.com/vc>; 4 Jln Usahawan 6; classes RM50; ☎9am-5pm) This famous pewter centre offers entertaining classes (30 minutes) where you make your own pewter bowl; advance booking required.

## Titivangsa

### Top Sights

- Lake Titivangsa ..... C1
- National Visual Art Gallery ..... C2

### Activities, Courses & Tours

- 1 Sutra Dance Theatre ..... B1

### Entertainment

- 2 Istana Budaya ..... B2
- Sutra Dance Theatre ..... (see 1)

### YMCA

LANGUAGE

(Map p54; ☎2274 1439; [www.ymcaki.com](http://www.ymcaki.com); 95 Jln Padang Belia) Offers Bahasa Malaysia classes, as well as courses studying Thai, Mandarin, Cantonese and Japanese. You can also study martial arts and different types of dancing here.

### Buddhist Maha Vihara

MEDITATION

(Map p54; ☎2274 1141; [www.buddhistmahavihara.com](http://www.buddhistmahavihara.com); 123 Jln Berhala) Meditation and chanting classes plus dharma talks take place most days. Classes are run on a donation basis.

### Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre

MUSIC & DANCE

(klpac; ☎4047 9060; [www.klpac.org](http://www.klpac.org); Jln Strachan, Sentul West) A variety of performing arts courses are offered here, including courses on traditional instruments, such as the gamelan (traditional Malay orchestra).

### Sutra Dance Theatre

MUSIC & DANCE

(Map p59; ☎4021 1092; [www.sutrafoundation.org.my](http://www.sutrafoundation.org.my); 12 Persiaran Titivangsa 3) Courses in Odissi and other forms of classical Indian dance are offered at this cultural centre near Taman Tasik Titivangsa.

## FISH SPAS

Often combined with foot reflexology operations, fish spas bring a new meaning to feeding the fish. Immerse your feet in a tank filled with the small *Garra rufa* and *Cyprinion macrostomus*, also known as Doctor Fish, and allow the flapping podiatrists to gently nibble away at the dead skin. It's an initially ticklish, but not wholly unpleasant, experience lasting 30 minutes (or as long as you can stand it!).

Among the places you can sample this service, which costs around RM30:

**Foot Master Dr Fish Spa** (Map p68; ☎2144 1916; 6th fl, Berjaya Times Sq, 1 Jln Imbi; ☉10am-10pm)

**Morino Kaze** (Map p68; ☎2141 1916; www.morinokaze.com.my; 2nd fl, Piccolo Galleria, 101 Jln Bukit Bintang; ☉noon-midnight)

**Kenko** (Map p68; ☎2141 6651; www.kenko.com.sg; Level 5, Pavilion KL, 169 Jln Bukit Bintang; ☉10am-10pm)

## Temple of Fine Arts

MUSIC & DANCE

(Map p54; ☎2274 3709; www.tfa.org.my; 114-116 Jln Berhala) This Indian cultural centre offers courses in classical Indian dance, song and music. Stage shows take place here throughout the year.



## Tours

### Simply Enak

FOOD TOUR

(☎017-287 8929; www.simplyenak.com; tours RM150, minimum of two people) 'Food Experience Captain' Pauline Lee will guide you on an informative and tasty voyage of Chinatown and Bangsar. 'Eat a local' home-cooked dinners (RM200) and cooking classes (RM550) can also be arranged.

### KL Hop-On Hop-Off

BUS TOUR

(☎2166 6162; www.myhoponhopoff.com; adult/child 24hr RM38/17, 48hr RM65/29; ☉8.30am-8.30pm) This double-decker wi-fi-enabled air-con bus makes a circuit of the main tourist sites half-hourly throughout the day. Stops include KLCC, Jln Bukit Bintang, Menara KL, Chinatown, Merdeka Square and the attractions of Lake Gardens. Tickets, which can be bought on the bus, last all day and you can get on and off as often as you like.

### Going Places Tours

ADVENTURE TOUR

(Map p50; ☎2078 4008; www.goingplaces-kl.com; 60a Jln Sultan, Original Backpackers Inn) Offers tours tailored to the backpacker market, including more adventurous options such as rafting, caving and rock-climbing adventures.



## Festivals & Events

The capital puts on a show for Malaysia's major holidays and festivals, including Chinese New Year, National Day and Deepavali.

## City Day

ARTS & CULTURE

KL commemorates becoming a federal territory on 1 February each year with celebrations at Tasik Perdana and Titiwangsa Lake Gardens.

## Malaysian Grand Prix

CAR RACE

(www.malaysiangp.com.my) Special shopping promotions and events along Jln Bukit Bintang accompany the Formula 1 race at Sepang International Circuit. March/April.

## KL International Film Festival

FILM

(www.kliff.my) Catch screenings and symposiums on local and international films in June.

## KL Festival

ARTS & CULTURE

(www.klfestival.org.my) July is a month of events showcasing Malaysian art, dance, theatre and music.

## KL Tower BASE Jump

ADVENTURE SPORTS

(www.kltowerjump.com) The only time you'll be able to see people legally flinging themselves off Menara KL is when the international BASE-jumping fraternity are in town, usually in September.



## Sleeping

KL is awash with both luxury hotels and budget hotels, plus many grubby fleapits offering windowless boxy rooms, appealing only for their rock-bottom rates. Characterful midrange options are thin on the ground.

Always ask about special deals as practically all midrange and top-end places offer promotions that can substantially slash rack rates; booking online will almost always bring the price down. The only time you should book ahead to be sure of accommodation are public holidays, when room discounts will not apply.

Chinatown is crammed with budget places (most are pretty awful) and there's a backpacker scene in the Golden Triangle. The best places fill up quickly, so book ahead. If other locations are full, Little India and the seedy Chow Kit area further north also have plenty of low-priced accommodation.

In KL budget (\$) means hotels and backpackers offering a dorm bed or a double room with an attached bathroom for under RM100 net; midrange (\$\$) properties have double rooms with attached bathrooms for RM100 to RM400 net; top-end (\$\$\$) places charge over RM400. At all budget places prices will be net, but at many others 10% service and 6% tax (expressed as ++) will be added to the bill.

## CHINATOWN & MASJID JAMEK



### BackHome

BACKPACKERS \$\$

(Map p50; ☎2022 0788; www.backhome.com.my; 30 Jln Tun HS Lee; dm/d with breakfast from RM42/120; 🍳🍷🍺) This chic pit stop for flash-packers offers polished concrete finishes, Zen simple decoration, fab rain showers and a blissful central courtyard sprouting spin-dly trees. It can be noisy on the street outside, but they've got that covered by offering earplugs for light sleepers. Also check out its cool cafe LOKL (p72).



### Reggae Mansion

BACKPACKERS \$\$

(Map p50; ☎2072 6877; www.reggaehostelsmalaysia.com/mansion/; 49-59 Jln Tun H S Lee; dm/d from RM38/120) Grooving to a superior beat than most backpacker places, including its own guesthouses in the heart of Chinatown, this is one cool operation. The decor

is white-washed faux colonial with contemporary touches including a flash cafe-bar on the ground floor, a rooftop bar, and a mini cinema (RM7) where the ticket includes a drink and popcorn.

## 5 Elements Hotel

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p50; ☎2031 6888; www.the5elementshotel.com.my; Lot 243 Jln Sultan; s/d with breakfast from RM180/220; 🍳🍷🍺) Offering a good range of rooms, some with views towards KL Tower, this hotel makes a credible stab at boutique stylings. We particularly liked the sensuous design motif snaking its way across the corridor and bedroom walls.

## Hotel Lok Ann

HOTEL \$

(Map p50; ☎2078 9544; www.birdnestguesthouse.com; 113 Jln Petaling; dm/d/tr RM30/80/100; 🍳🍷🍺) Rebranding itself a 'heritage' hotel, the retro Lok Ann offers sparkingly clean, freshly painted spacious rooms with windows, TV, phone and large shower rooms. Rates include breakfast and there's also a kitchen and pleasant common area.

## Hotel 1915

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p50; ☎2026 0042; www.hotel1915kl.com; 49 Jln Leboh Ampang; r from RM118; 🍳🍷🍺) It's worth paying an extra RM10 at this appealing new hotel to get a room with a window. Each floor is named after a curry ingredient, but the decor is monochrome rather than spicy.

## AnCasa Hotel & Spa

### Kuala Lumpur

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p50; ☎2026 6060; www.ancasa-hotel.com; Jln Tun Tan Cheng Lock; d from RM360; 🍳🍷🍺) Promotions halve the rack rates at one of Chinatown's best midrange options, although

## KUALA LUMPUR FOR CHILDREN

There are dozens of attractions around KL set up specifically to keep little ones entertained. A good starting point is the **Lake Gardens** area, particularly the **KL Bird Park** and the playground and boating pond in the **Tun Abdul Razak Heritage Park** (formerly known as the Lake Gardens Park). The waterfall splash pool in the **KLCC Park** is also great for waterbabies, as is the adjacent adventure playground and the **Aquaria KLCC**.

Kids will also enjoy KL's malls. Berjaya Times Square has shops for kids of all ages, plus an indoor theme park. For younger kids, try **Megakidz** (☎2282 9300; www.megakidz.com.my; 3rd fl, Mid Valley Megamall; under 2/2-16yr Mon-Fri RM11/22, Sat & Sun RM14/28, crèche service under/over 4yr RM30/35 for 2hr; ☀10am-9.30pm) in the Mid Valley Megamall – there are storytelling sessions, art activities and an indoor adventure playground, and the centre provides a crèche service for kids aged four and over.

There are more theme parks dotted around KL, including the indoor and outdoor parks at **Genting Highlands** and the wet and wild park at **Sunway Lagoon**. For nature activities, head to **Zoo Negara** or the canopy walkway at the **Forest Research Institute of Malaysia**.

there's a small surcharge for weekend stays and internet access is chargeable. The comfortable rooms are well equipped. The hotel also has a Balinese-style spa and can arrange homestays around the peninsula.

### Explorers Guesthouse

BACKPACKERS \$

(Map p50; ☎2022 2928; www.theexplorersguesthouse.com; 128-130 Jln Tun H S Lee; dm/s/d & tw from RM30/68/88; 🍷🍷🍷) Another of the new backpackers giving the Chinatown oldies a hiding. Explorers follows up a comfy, spacious lobby with clean, airy rooms, colourfully painted walls and a few arty touches.

### Hotel Chinatown (2)

HOTEL \$

(☎2072 9933; www.hotelchinatown2.com; 70-72 Jln Petaling; s/d from RM69/90; 🍷🍷🍷) The cheapest rooms have no windows but are also away from the noisy main street. The lobby offers a comfy lounge area, water feature, book exchange and piano.

### Wheeler's Guest House

HOSTEL \$

(Map p50; ☎2070 1386; www.backpackerskl.com/wheelers.htm; 131-133 Jln Tun HS Lee, level 2; dm/r with shared bathroom from RM13/25, r with private bathroom RM50; 🍷🍷) Prison-like rooms, but this hostel does have a mini-aquarium, gay-friendly staff, a great rooftop terrace where free Friday-night dinners are hosted, and homemade yoghurt and muesli for breakfast.

## GOLDEN TRIANGLE, KLCC & JALAN TUN RAZAK



### Villa Samadhi

BOUTIQUE HOTEL \$\$\$

(☎2143 2300; www.villasamadhi.com.my; 8 Jln Madge; r from RM500; 🍷🍷🍷) It's hard to believe you're in the heart of KL while staying at this gorgeous 21-room boutique villa. The black polished concrete, bamboo and reclaimed timber rooms with luxurious light fixtures, idyllic central pool, lush foliage, rooftop bar (serving complimentary cocktails) and intimate modern Malay restaurant Mandi Mandi combine to conjure an antidote to urban stress.



### The Courtyard

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p68; ☎2141 1017; www.courtyard.com.my; 623 (No 51D) Tingkat Tong Shin; d from RM192; 🍷🍷🍷) A former backstreet hostel has been transformed into this calm, stylish oasis steps away from both the eats of Jln Alor and the bars of Changkat Bukit Bintang. Contemporary design rooms are very comfy and great value for what they offer.



### YY38 Hotel

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p68; ☎2148 8838; www.yy38hotel.com.my; 38 Tingkat Tong Shin; s/d/loft room from RM100/120/360; 🍷🍷) The bulk of the rooms here are fine but no-frills. However, the 7th floor offers 17 creatively designed duplexes, each sleeping three, with fun themes ranging from Marilyn Monroe to circus; it features a sawn-in-half classic mini as part of the decor!

### Sekeping Sin Chew Kee

APARTMENT \$\$\$

(Map p68; www.sekeping.com; 3 Jln Sin Chew Kee; apt RM700; 🍷🍷) Architect Ng Seksan's pared-back, quirky style is in full evidence at his latest venture, tucked away on the edge of the Golden Triangle on a street of old houses. Raw and beautiful, the two apartments here sleep up to six and have full kitchens and outdoor relaxation spaces.

### Hotel Maya

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p56; ☎2711 8866; www.hotelmaya.com.my; 138 Jln Ampang; r/ste with breakfast from RM700/1000; 🍷🍷🍷) Still one of KL's most stylish hotels, even if there's wear and tear to some of their sleek timber-floored studios and suites. Rack rates include airport transfers, as well as a host of other goodies, while promotional rates – nearly half the official ones – include only breakfast and wi-fi. Their hydrotherapy pool is a plus.

### Mandarin Oriental

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p56; ☎2380 8888; www.mandarinoriental.com/kualalumpur; Jln Pinang; r/ste from RM1080/3000; 🍷🍷🍷) Backing onto the greenery of KLCC Park, the Mandarin is one for sybarites. Silks and batiks lend an Asian feel to the rooms, which have every conceivable amenity. The Oriental Club rooms are the ones to pick, allowing access to a lounge with a great view of the Petronas Towers. There's a spa and an infinity pool that seems to merge into the parkland beyond.

### Impiana

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p68; ☎2141 1111; www.impiana.com; 13 Jln Pinang; d with breakfast from RM450; 🍷🍷🍷) This chic property offers spacious rooms with parquet floors and lots of seductive amenities including a spa and an infinity pool with a view across to the Petronas Towers (partly marred by the soon-to-open Grand Hyatt). Not to be outdone by the Hyatt, the Impiana is adding a second tower of rooms.

## Jalan Tun Razak & Around



### G Tower Hotel

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p63; ☎2168 1919; [www.gtowerhotel.com](http://www.gtowerhotel.com); 199 Jln Tun Razak; s/d with breakfast from RM592/626; 🍷🍷🍷🍷) There's an exclusive atmosphere at this slickly designed property atop an office complex. Only hotel guests and tenants can access the gym, infinity pools, and top-floor lounge, restaurant and bar. Arty black-and-white prints set a sophisticated tone in the bedrooms. Ask for one of the slightly bigger corner rooms, preferably with a view of Tabung Haji.

## Jalan Tun Razak & Around

### Sights

- 1 Badan Warisan Malaysia.....A4
- 2 Rumah Penghulu.....A4

### Sleeping

- 3 G Tower Hotel.....A2
- 4 MiCasa All Suite Hotel.....B2

### Eating

- 5 Acme Bar & Coffee.....A2
- Cilantro.....(see 4)
- 6 Imbi Market.....A5
- 7 Top Hat.....A3

### Shopping

- 8 Kompleks Budaya Kraf.....A4

### Traders Hotel Kuala Lumpur

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p68; ☎2332 9888; [www.tradershotels.com](http://www.tradershotels.com); KLCC, off Jln Kia Peng; d/stc from RM719/963; 🍷🍷🍷🍷) The views are good either way, but it's probably worth paying the small supplement for a room facing the Petronas Towers at this contemporary design addition to KL's portfolio of luxe hotels. Their rooftop pool and bar is a famous KL hangout.

### Sahabat Guest House

GUESTHOUSE \$

(☎2142 0689; [www.sahabateguesthouse.com](http://www.sahabateguesthouse.com); 41 Jln Sahabat; d with breakfast from RM96; 🍷🍷🍷) Rush to book this adorable blue-painted eight-room guesthouse tucked away off Tingkat Tong Shin. Small but comfy bedrooms, with small en suite bathrooms, are brightened up with a feature wall plastered in vivid patterned wallpaper. There's a small kitchen and a grassy front garden in which to relax. Rates are slightly higher from Friday to Sunday.

### Anggun Boutique Hotel

BOUTIQUE HOTEL \$\$

(Map p68; ☎2145 8003; [www.anggunkl.com](http://www.anggunkl.com); 7-9 Tingkat Tong Shin; d with breakfast from RM340; 🍷🍷) Two 1920s shophouses have been combined to create this antique-style, boutique property that's a welcome addition to a busy strip. The rooftop restaurant and bar is a leafy oasis hung with twinkling lights. Avoid rooms facing the noisy street though – or bring earplugs.

### Sarang Vacation Homes

GUESTHOUSE \$\$

(Map p68; ☎012-210 0218; [www.sarangvacationhomes.com](http://www.sarangvacationhomes.com); 6 Jln Galloway; s/d from RM130/150; 🍷🍷) Michael and Christina run this appealing bed-and-breakfast operation. They have houses, apartments and rooms for rent in

five nearby locations. The furnishings are a bit worn, but the vibe is relaxed and welcoming and the location is excellent. It's a skip away from Jln Alor in a low-rise residential enclave.

### Rainforest Bed & Breakfast

HOSTEL \$\$

(Map p68; ☎2145 3525; www.rainforestbnbhotel.com; 27 Jln Mesui; dm/d/tw with breakfast RM35/105/130; ☎@☎) The lush foliage sprouting around and tumbling off the tiered balconies of this high-quality guesthouse is eye-catching and apt for its name. Inside, bright red walls and timber-lined rooms (some without windows) are visually distinctive, along with the collection of Chinese pottery figurines. Friendly staff also make it a very appealing option.

### Classic Inn

HOSTEL \$\$

(Map p68; ☎2148 8648; www.classicinn.com.my; 52 Lg 1/77A, Changkat Tambi Dollah; dm/s/d RM35/88/118; ☎@) Occupying a smartly renovated, yellow-painted shophouse on the southern edge of the Golden Triangle, this is a retro-charming choice with dorms and private rooms, a small grassy garden and welcoming staff.

### Lodge ParadiZe Hotel

HOSTEL \$\$

(Map p68; ☎2142 0122; www.lodgeparadiZe.com; 2 Jln Tengah; d from RM125; ☎@) This nicely revamped hotel in a four-storey 1940s building offers good value budget rooms at the back, which are more sheltered from traffic noise than the better furnished rooms in the main building. Long-stay deals are also available.

### Number Eight Guesthouse

GUESTHOUSE \$\$

(Map p68; ☎2144 2050; www.numbereight.com.my; 8-10 Jln Tingkat Tong Shin; r without/with private bathroom RM85/115; ☎@☎) A recent change of ownership has seen some transformations at the long-running Number Eight. The minimalist design is looking a little shabby, but remains appealing and its value-for-money rooms, some with TVs and DVD players, leave many budget competitors standing. Rates include breakfast.

### Radius International Hotel

HOSTEL \$\$

(Map p68; ☎2715 3888; www.radius-international.com; 51A Changkat Bukit Bintang; r from RM190; ☎@☎) At the foot of KL's most buzzing restaurant and bar strip, Radius has all the facilities of an international chain hotel, including a decent-sized swimming pool,

but at lower prices. Opt for the tasteful 'premier' rooms which start at RM300.

### Hotel Capitol

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p68; ☎2143 7000; www.fh hotels.com; Jln Bulan; r from RM450; ☎@☎) Bland but reliable and very central. The pricier loft-style and premium corner rooms sport hip furnishings and good views. Guests have access to the nearby Federal Hotel's swimming pool.

### Royale Bintang Kuala Lumpur

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p68; ☎2143 9898; www.royale-bintang-hotel.com.my; 17-21 Jln Bukit Bintang; r from RM534) No design diva but a well-run and pleasantly presented hotel; their outdoor pool is a plus.

### Piccolo Hotel

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p68; ☎2146 5000; www.thepiccolohotel.com; 101 Jln Bukit Bintang; r from RM480; ☎@☎) Although its boutique look is somewhat cheaply thrown together, we do like the striking marine life images decorating the walls at this hotel in the midst of the Bintang Walk shopping strip. Almost constant promotional rates via online bookings bring it down to a budget category.

### Red Palm

HOSTEL \$

(Map p68; ☎2143 1279; www.redpalm-kl.com; 5 Tingkat Tong Shin; dm/s/d/tr incl breakfast RM30/55/75/105; ☎@☎) Cosy shophouse hotel offering small and thin-walled rooms with shared bathrooms. However, the communal areas are great and the owners charming.

## LITTLE INDIA

### Tune Hotel

HOTEL \$

(Map p56; www.tunehotels.com; r from RM90; ☎@☎) Book online six months in advance and it's possible to snag a room with a bathroom for under RM50. The basic rate, however, just gets you the room – air-con, towel and toiletries, and wi-fi access is extra. Each floor is sponsored, which means you'll find yourself gazing at an ad for, say, Maggi or Nippon Paints, in your room and along the corridors.

### Frenz Hotel

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p56; ☎2693 7878; www.frenzhotel.com.my; 135 Jln TAR; s/d from RM210/260; ☎@☎) A step up from other midrange options in the area, with comfortable, clean rooms. Promotional rates are usually on offer, and breakfast (RM12) is served in Zam Zam restaurant next door.



## BRICKFIELDS, KL SENTRAL & BANGSAR BARU



### Sekeping Tenggara

GUESTHOUSE \$\$\$

(☎017-207 5977; [www.tenggiri.com](http://www.tenggiri.com); 48 Jln Tenggara, Bangsar; r from RM200; ㊟㊟㊟) Even if it didn't provide access to architect Ng Seksan's superlative private collection of contemporary Malaysian art (displayed in the rooms of the adjoining house) this would be a lovely place to stay. The rough luxe mix of concrete, wood and wire decor (with cleverly recycled materials making up lamp fixtures) is softened by abundant garden greenery and a cooling plunge pool. There's a basic kitchen, a housekeeper, and several great places to eat on nearby Lg Kurau. The owners also run the similar **Sekeping Terasek** (Map p84; ☎017-207 5977; [www.sekeping.com/terasek](http://www.sekeping.com/terasek); 42a Jln Terasek, Bangsar; r/house RM200/1000; ㊟㊟) nearby and **Sekeping Sin Chew Kee** (p62) in KL's centre.

### Hilton Kuala Lumpur

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p54; ☎2264 2264; [www.hilton.com](http://www.hilton.com); 3 Jln Stesen Sentral; d/ste from RM650/1300; ㊟㊟㊟)

Sharing a fabulous landscaped pool and spa with the Meridien next door, the Hilton is a design diva's dream. Sliding doors open to join the bathroom to the bedroom, picture windows present soaring city views and rooms are decked out from floor to ceiling in eye-catching materials.

### Majestic Hotel

HISTORIC HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p54; ☎2785 8000; [www.majestickl.com](http://www.majestickl.com); 5 Jln Sultan Hishamuddin; r from RM500; ㊟㊟㊟) Originally opened in 1932, and pre-WWII the KL equivalent of Raffles in Singapore, this long-shuttered hotel reopened at the end of 2012. The heritage building has been impeccably refurbished, although the bulk of the rooms are in the newly built Tower wing. The Charles Rennie Mackintosh-inspired decor of the spa adds extra elegance while the Colonial Cafe and Tea Lounge play up to the heritage experience.

### YMCA

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p54; ☎2274 1439; [www.ymcakl.com](http://www.ymcakl.com); 95 Jln Padang Belia; d or tw RM118, tr without bathroom)

## SERVICED APARTMENTS

Some of the KL's best accommodation deals, particularly for longer stays, are offered by serviced apartments. Studios and suites tend to be far larger and better equipped than you'd get for a similar price at top-end hotels. There are quite a few of these complexes scattered across the city, some attached to hotels and sharing their facilities. For short stays breakfast is usually included. Our top picks:

**Parkroyal Serviced Suites** (Map p68; ☎2084 1000; [www.parkroyalhotels.com](http://www.parkroyalhotels.com); 1 Jln Nagansari; apt from RM424; ㊟㊟㊟) New property in a great location with sophisticated design studios and one-/two-bedroom suites. Good facilities include two outdoor pools, one on the roof.

**Fraser Place Kuala Lumpur** (Map p68; ☎2118 6288; <http://kualalumpur.fraserhospitality.com>; 10 Jln Perak, Lot 163; apt from RM638; ㊟㊟㊟) Good workspaces and walk-in closets feature in these colourfully designed apartments. The facilities, including an outdoor infinity pool, gym, sauna and games room, are top notch.

**Westin Kuala Lumpur** (Map p68; ☎2731 8333; [www.westin.com/kualalumpur](http://www.westin.com/kualalumpur); 199 Jln Bukit Bintang; d/apt from RM800/1300; ㊟㊟㊟) It's easy to see why long-term residents love its spacious, modern rooms with their full kitchens and glassed-in balconies. It also has a good gym and stylish restaurants and bars.

**MiCasa All Suite Hotel** (Map p63; ☎2179 8000; [www.micasahotel.com](http://www.micasahotel.com); 368B Jln Tun Razak; apt from RM420; ㊟㊟㊟) A choice of one-, two- or three-bedroom suites – all reasonably priced, with wooden floors and kitchens. Relax beside the large, palm-tree-fringed pool, or enjoy their small spa and the gourmet restaurant **Cilantro** (Map p63; ☎2179 8082; [www.cilantrokl.com](http://www.cilantrokl.com); set lunch/dinner RM150/270; ☀noon-2pm Fri, 6pm-1am Mon-Sat).

**Pacific Regency Hotel Suites** (Map p68; ☎2332 7777; [www.pacific-regency.com](http://www.pacific-regency.com); Jln Punchak, Menara Panglobal; apt from RM650; ㊟㊟㊟) Several new floors of rooms with an updated design were in the works during our latest visit. Head to the roof to enjoy the rooftop pool and the cocktail/DJ bar **Luna**.

RM138; 📶 Handy for KL Sentral, the Y has spic-and-span rooms with TVs, telephones and proper wardrobes (not just hangers on a wall hook). There's laundry facilities, a shop and a cafe with wi-fi access as well as tennis courts for hire if you become a member.



## Eating

KL is a nonstop feast. You can dine in incredible elegance or mingle with locals at thousands of street stalls – it's all good and it's seldom heavy on the pocket.

Whether you're on a budget or not, most often the best food is from the hawker stalls, cheap cafes (called *kopitiam*) and inexpensive restaurants (*restoran*). Hygiene standards at hawker stalls are generally good and you should have little to fear from eating at them. However, if this is not your thing – or you just want air-con with your meal – then KL's many food courts, usually located in shopping malls, offer an answer.

### GOLDEN TRIANGLE & KLCC



#### Kedai Makanan

#### Dan Minuman TKS

CHINESE \$\$

(Map p68; Jln Alor; mains RM15-30; ☎5pm-4am) Our favourite place to eat on KL's busiest food street is this nontouristy Sichuan joint that has a menu only in Chinese (don't panic, there are pictures and the friendly staff speak English). Prepare for a taste explosion from the chilli-oil fried fish to the gunpowder chicken buried in a pile of mouth-numbing fried chillies.



#### Imbi Market

HAWKER \$

(Map p63; Jln Kampung, Pasar Baru Bukit Bintang; meal RM10; ☎6.30am-12.30pm Tue-Sun) The official name is Pasar Baru Bukit Bintang, but everyone knows it simply as Imbi Market. Breakfast is like a party here with all the friendly and curious locals happily recommending their favourite stalls. We like **Sisters Crispy Popiah**; **Teluk Intan Chee Cheung Fun**, where Amy Ong serves a lovely oyster-and-peanut *congee* (rice porridge), and egg puddings; and **Bunn Choon** for the creamy mini egg tarts. The market will be moving to a new building in the next few years as the area is slated for redevelopment.



#### Frangipani

FRENCH \$\$\$

(Map p68; ☎2144 3001; www.frangipani.com.my; 25 Changkat Bukit Bintang; 3-course menu RM170; ☎6.30pm-10.30pm Tue-Sun) Much feted for its innovative approach to European fusion



## GOOD FOOD BLOG

KLites have strong opinions about their favourite places to eat – and they're very happy to share them online. One site we highly recommend is **Fried Chillies** (www.friedchillies.com), which includes spot-on reviews by some of the most enthusiastic foodies we've met, as well as video clips.

cooking, Frangipani is leagues ahead of most of the competition. The decor is as slick as the menu, with a stunning dining room surrounding a reflecting pool, and there's an equally stylish bar upstairs.

### Pinchos Tapas Bar

TAPAS \$\$

(Map p68; ☎2145 8482; www.pinchos.com.my; 18 Changkat Bukit Bintang; tapas RM13-30; ☎5-11pm food, until 3am bar) Serving delicious tapas, this real deal place is run by a Spaniard and packed with KL's approving Spanish-speaking community. Ideal either for a solo meal and drink, or fun with a group so you can munch your way through the wide-ranging menu.

### Twenty One Kitchen & Bar

FUSION \$\$\$

(Map p68; ☎2142 0021; www.drbar.asia; 20-1 Changkat Bukit Bintang; meals RM60-80; ☎noon-3am; 🍷) Lots of interesting choices on the menu here, several of which you can sample together on tasting plates. The bar upstairs, with a deck overlooking the street, gets cranking at weekends when a DJ spins chill and dance tunes.

### Little Penang Kafé

MALAY, NONYA \$\$

(Map p56; ☎2163 0215; Level 4, Suria KLCC; mains from RM15; ☎11.30am-9.30pm) At peak meal times expect a long line outside this mall joint serving authentic food from Penang, including specialities such as curry *mee* (spicy soup noodles with prawns) and spicy Siamese *lemak laksa* (curry laksa) available only from Friday to Sunday. There's also a branch at Mid Valley Megamall.

### Ben's

INTERNATIONAL \$\$

(Map p68; ☎2141 5290; www.thebiggroup.co/bens; Level 6, Pavilion KL, 168 Bukit Bintang; mains RM10-40; ☎11am-10pm Sun-Thu, until midnight Fri & Sat; 🍷) The flagship brand of the BIG group of dining outlets (which include the classy Plan B cafes) delivers on both style and substance. There's a tempting range of eastern and western comfort foods, appealing, a

relaxed resort-feel design, and nice touches such as a box of cards with recipes and talk topics on each table. Other branches are in Suria KLCC and Publika.

### Bijan

MALAY \$\$\$

(Map p68; ☎2031 3575; www.bijanrestaurant.com; 3 Jln Ceylon; mains RM30-70; ☎6.30-11pm Mon-Sat) Serves skilfully cooked traditional dishes in a sophisticated dining room that spills out into a tropical garden. Must-try dishes include *rendang daging* (dry beef curry with lemongrass), *masak lemak ikan* (Penang-style fish curry with turmeric) and *ikan panggang* (grilled skate with tamarind).

### Top Hat

NONYA, BRITISH \$\$\$

(Map p63; ☎2142 8611; www.top-hat-restaurants.com; 3 Jln Stonor; meals RM60-110; ☎noon-10.30pm) Set in a spacious bungalow surrounded by peaceful gardens and serving both traditional British – think oxtail stew and bread-and-butter pudding – as well as local dishes, such as Nonya laksa (RM28). All meals come with signature ‘top hats’ (pastry shells filled with sliced veggies) and choice of local dessert.

### Cuisine Gourmet by Nathalie

FRENCH \$\$\$

(Map p68; ☎2072 4452; www.cuisinegourmetbynathalie.com; Menara Taipan, Jln Puncak; mains RM45-90; ☎) Having made her mark with a

smaller outlet in Publika (also worth visiting), Nathalie gets more creative in this fine dining space, elegantly decked out in mauve and grey. The bento style lunches are a bargain and the desserts sublime.

### Enak

MALAY \$\$\$

(Map p68; ☎2141 8973; www.enakkl.com; Feast fl, Starhill Gallery, 181 Jln Bukit Bintang; meals RM70-100; ☎noon-1am) One of many options on Starhill Gallery’s ‘Feast’ floor, Enak is justly famous for finely presented Malay cuisine with a sophisticated twist.

### Atmosphere 360

MALAY, INTERNATIONAL \$\$\$

(Map p68; ☎2020 2020; www.atmosphere360.com.my; 2 Jln Puncak, Menara KL; buffet lunch/afternoon tea/dinner RM88/58/198; ☎noon-2.30pm & 6.30-11pm) It takes 90 minutes for you to see all of KL from your seat at this revolving restaurant atop KL Tower. The buffets feature a wide range of Malay and international dishes and are consistently good. Book at least a day ahead for a window seat or dinner, when there’s also a live band and more dishes on offer.

### Blue Boy Vegetarian

#### Food Centre

CHINESE, MALAY \$

(Map p68; ☎2144 9011; Jln Tong Shin; mains RM3-10; ☎7.30am-9.30pm; ☎) It’s hard to believe that everything prepared at this spotless

## TRADITIONAL WET & DRY FOOD MARKETS

The relocation of Imbi Market to make way for a new financial district is a sign of the times in KL: Western-style supermarkets have become far more common here than the semi-outdoor wet and dry food markets found across Asia. However, a few such traditional markets still exist and are worth searching out – arrive early in the morning to experience them at full throttle.

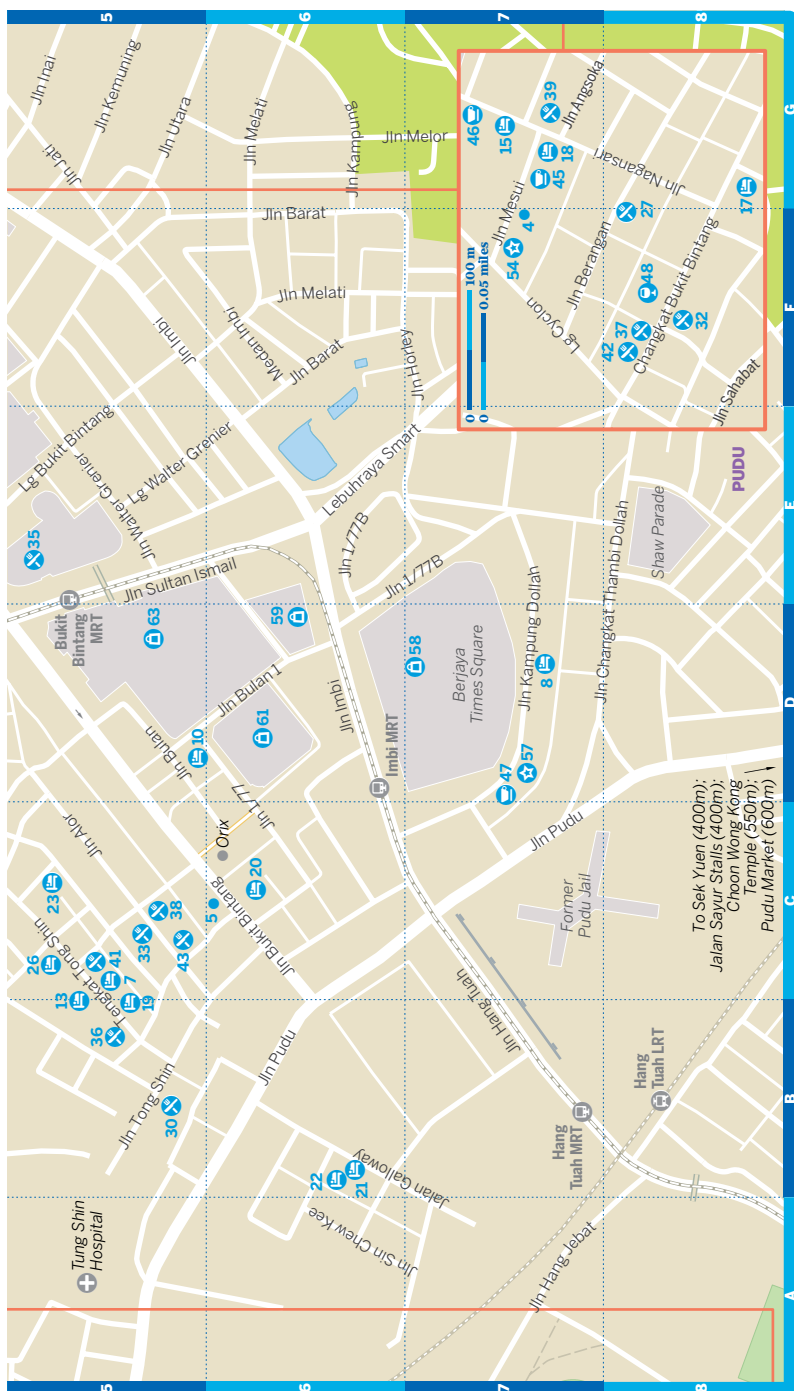
**Pudu Market** (Map p68; Jln Pasar Baru; ☎6am-2pm) KL’s biggest wet and dry market is a frenetic place, full of squawking chickens, frantic shoppers and porters forcing their way through the crowds with outrageous loads. Stalls here sell everything from goldfish to pigs’ heads, cows’ tongues and durians in baskets. The market is five minutes’ walk from Pudu LRT station; go south along Jln Pudu, right onto Jln Pasar, then right down Jln Pasar Baharu, passing the colourful Choon Wan Kong, a Chinese temple dating from 1879.

**Bazaar Baru Chow Kit** (Chow Kit Market; Map p56; 469-473 Jln TAR; ☎8am-9pm) Apart from freshly butchered meat and filleted fish, there’s a staggering array of weird and wonderful tropical fruit and vegetables on sale here, as well as clothes, toys, buckets, stationery, noodles, spices and other commodities. Pushing through the narrow aisles is a heady, sensory experience.

**Chinatown Wet Market** (Map p50; ☎7am-3pm) Running west of the main market towards Jln Tun HS Lee is this covered market where locals shop for fresh fish, vegetables and gruesomely anatomical cuts of meat – those clucking chickens in cages don’t stay alive for long!

## Golden Triangle





## Golden Triangle

### 📍 Top Sights

Aquaria KLCC .....	E1
Menara KL .....	A1

### 📍 Sights

1 Bukit Nanas Forest Reserve .....	A2
2 KLCC Park .....	E1

### 📍 Activities, Courses & Tours

Asianel Reflexology Spa .....	(see 62)
Foot Master Dr Fish Spa .....	(see 58)
3 Kenko .....	E3
4 Lightworks .....	F7
Morino Kaze .....	(see 16)
5 Reborn .....	C6
6 Spa Village .....	F4

### 📍 Sleeping

7 Anggun Boutique Hotel .....	C5
8 Classic Inn .....	D7
9 Fraser Place Kuala Lumpur .....	C1
10 Hotel Capitol .....	D5
11 Impiana .....	E1
12 Lodge Paradize Hotel .....	D3
13 Number Eight Guesthouse .....	B5
14 Pacific Regency Hotel Suites .....	B2
15 Parkroyal Serviced Suites .....	G7
16 Piccolo Hotel .....	E4
17 Radius International Hotel .....	G8
18 Rainforest Bed & Breakfast .....	G7
19 Red Palm .....	B5
20 Royale Bintang Kuala Lumpur .....	C6
21 Sarang Vacation Homes .....	B6
22 Sekeping Sin Chew Kee .....	B6
23 The Courtyard .....	C5
24 Traders Hotel Kuala Lumpur .....	F1
25 Westin Kuala Lumpur .....	F4
26 YY38 Hotel .....	C5

### 📍 Eating

27 Albion KL .....	F8
Atmosphere 360 .....	(see 1)
28 Ben's .....	E4
29 Bijan .....	B4
30 Blue Boy Vegetarian Food Centre .....	B5
31 Cuisine Gourmet by Nathalie .....	B2
Enak .....	(see 62)

32 Frangipani .....	F8
33 Kedai Makanan Dan Minuman TKS .....	C5
34 La Vie En Rose .....	A3
Loaf .....	(see 60)
35 Lot 10 Hutong .....	E5
36 Ngau Kee Beef Ball Noodles .....	B5
37 Pinchos Tapas Bar .....	F8
38 Restoran Beh Brothers .....	C5
39 Restoran Nagansari Curry House .....	G7
40 Santouka .....	F4
41 Sao Nam .....	C5
Sisters Noodle .....	(see 38)
42 Twenty One Kitchen & Bar .....	F8
43 Wong Ah Wah .....	C5

### 📍 Drinking

Frangipani Bar .....	(see 32)
Luk Yu Tea House .....	(see 62)
Luna .....	(see 14)
44 Neo Tamarind .....	C1
45 Palate Palette .....	G7
46 Paper + Toast .....	G7
47 Sixty Nine Bistro .....	D7
Sky Bar .....	(see 24)
48 Social .....	F8
49 Starhill Tea Salon .....	E4
50 Taps Beer Bar .....	C3
Teeq Brasserie .....	(see 35)
Village Bar .....	(see 62)

### 📍 Entertainment

51 Blue Boy .....	E4
52 Golden Screen Cinemas .....	E3
53 KL Live .....	C1
54 No Black Tie .....	F7
55 Seri Melayu .....	F3
56 The Venue .....	E3
57 Wings .....	D7

### 📍 Shopping

58 Berjaya Times Square .....	D7
59 Imbi Plaza .....	D6
60 Pavilion KL .....	E3
61 Plaza Low Yat .....	D6
62 Starhill Gallery .....	F4
63 Sungei Wang Plaza .....	D5

hawker-style cafe at the base of a backstreet apartment block is vegetarian, but it's true. The *char kway teow* (broad noodles fried in chilli and blackbean sauce) is highly recommended.

### Acme Bar & Coffee

INTERNATIONAL \$\$

(Map p63; ☎2162 2288; [www.acmebarcoffee.com](http://www.acmebarcoffee.com); Troika, Ground Fl, 19 Persiaran KLCC; mains RM30-60; ☀11am-midnight Mon-Thu, 11am-1am Fri, 9.30am-1am Sat, 9.30am-5pm Sun) Blink and you might be in a chic bistro in New York, Paris or Syd-



ney. Service can be slapdash, but it's good for weekend brunch or drinks and nibbles. In the works – and sure to be a showstopper, if only for its stunning skyline views – is **Troika Sky Dining** on the 23rd level of the same Norman Foster-designed building.

### Loaf

BAKERY \$\$

(Map p68; ☎2145 3036; www.theloaf.net; Levels 3 & 4, 168 Jln Bukit Bintang, Pavilion KL; meals RM10-20; ☉10am-10pm) This bakery cafe and bistro (which has ex-PM Dr Mahathir as an investor) is a Malaysian take on a Japanese baked goods shop. Its big range of baked goods is uniformly divine and we love the mini cheesecakes for a quick snack.

### Restoran Nagansari

#### Curry House

MALAY, INDIAN \$

(Map p68; Jln Nagansari; meals RM5-10; ☉7am-midnight) This simple hawker-style restaurant serves a good selection of Malay dishes – soup *mee*, tom yum and so on – with a few Indian favourites thrown in for good measure. Fans blow moist air around the dining hall to keep diners cool.

### Sao Nam

VIETNAMESE \$\$

(Map p68; ☎2144 1225; www.saonam.com.my; 25 Tingkat Tong Shin; mains RM20-35; ☉noon-2.30pm & 7.30-10.30pm) Stand by for huge plates of delicious Vietnamese food, garnished with basil, mint, lettuce and sweet dips. The starter *banh xeo* (a huge Vietnamese pancake with meat, seafood or vegetables) is a meal all by itself.

### La Vie En Rose

FRENCH \$\$\$

(Map p68; ☎2078 3883; http://www.cuisine-studio.net/; 39 Jln Raja Chulan; mains RM40-80; ☉noon-2.30pm & 6.30-10.30pm Tue-Fri, 10am-10.30pm Sat & Sun; ☎) The location, in an airy bungalow with a terrace overlooking Bukit Nanas and KL Tower, is unique, along with its canned fish served *in* the can. Best for weekend brunch (from RM50) when breads and pastries flow freely from its own bakery.

### Ngau Kee Beef Ball Noodles

CHINESE \$

(Map p68; Tingkat Tong Shin; noodles RM5; ☉24hr) The dish at this venerable street stall comes in two parts: dry, steamed noodles topped with a thick soy-sauce mince, and the chunky beef balls in a clear soup – delicious! Refresh your palate with their salty-sweet lime drink.

### Lot 10 Hutong

FOOD COURT \$\$

(Map p68; 50 Jln Sultan Ismail, Basement, Lot 10; mains RM3-20; ☉10am-10pm) The concept is a collection of greatest hits from around Malaysia's culinary map made by experienced vendors. In the warren-like set-up you can dine on classic renditions of dishes such as pork stew *bak kut the*, chicken rice and Hokkien *mee*.

### Santouka

JAPANESE \$\$

(Map p68; ☎2143 8878; www.santouka.co.jp; Level 6, Pavilion Kuala Lumpur, 168 Jln Bukit Bintang; mains RM30-40; ☉11am-9.45pm) Slurp ramen noodles in a rich pork broth at this joint in Pavilion's Tokyo Street, an outlet of a famous stall originating from the Japanese island of Hokkaido.

## DON'T MISS

### JALAN ALOR

The great common denominator of KL's food scene – hauling in everyone from sequestered society babes to penny-strapped backpackers – are the restaurants and stalls lining Jln Alor. From around 5pm till late every evening, the street transforms into a continuous open-air dining space with hundreds of plastic tables and chairs and rival caterers shouting out to passersby to drum up business (avoid the pushiest ones!). Most places serve alcohol and you can sample pretty much every Malay-Chinese dish imaginable, from grilled fish and satay to *kai-lan* (Chinese greens) in oyster sauce and fried noodles with frogs' legs. Thai food is also popular.

Recommended options include Kedai Makanan Dan Minuman TKS (p66) for amazing Sichuan dishes; the small complex **Restoran Beh Brothers** (Map p68; 21A Jln Alor; meals RM10-15; ☉24hr), one of the few places open from 7am for breakfast, where the **Sisters Noodle** (Map p68) stall does delicious 'drunken' chicken *mee* (noodles) with rice wine, and there's also a good Hong Kong-style dim sum stall (24 hours); and **Wong Ah Wah** (Map p68; Jln Alor; ☉4pm-4am), unbeatable for addictive spicy chicken wings, as well as grilled seafood, tofu and satay.

## CHINATOWN &amp; MASJID JAMEK

**TOP CHOICE** **Madras Lane Hawkers** **HAWKER \$**  
(Map p50; Madras Lane; noodles RM5; ☎8am-4pm Tue-Sun) Weave your way through Chinatown's wet market to find this short alley of stalls tucked between Jln Tun HS Lee and Jln Petaling. Standout operators including the one offering 10 types of *yong tau fu* in a fish broth (9.30am to 3.30pm) and, at the far end of the strip, the one serving *asam* (tamarind) and curry laksa.

**TOP CHOICE** **Old China Café** **MALAY, NONYA \$\$**  
(Map p50; ☎2072 5915; www.oldchina.com.my; 11 Jln Balai Polis; mains RM40-50; ☎11.30am-10pm) Housed in the old guild hall of the Selangor & Federal Territory Laundry Association, this long-established, atmospheric cafe serves Nonya dishes from Melaka and Penang, including a fine beef rendang (coconut and lime-leaf curry) with coconut rice and fiery Nonya laksa soup with seafood. Their branch **Precious** (Map p50; ☎2273 7372; 1st fl, Central Market; mains RM40-60; ☎11.30am-10pm) in Central Market serves a similar menu and tends to be less busy.

**Ikan Panggang** **HAWKER \$\$**  
(Map p50; ☎019-315 9448; spicy seafood RM12; ☎5-11pm Tue-Sun) Tuck into spicy fish and seafood dishes and luscious chicken wings from this unsigned stall outside Hong Leong Bank, tucked behind the stalls on the corner of Jln Petaling and Jln Hang Lekir. It generally takes 20 minutes for your foil-wrapped pouch of seafood to cook, allowing time to explore the market. Wash the meal down with a glass of *mata kucing* (meaning 'cat's eye'), a refreshing Asian fruit drink, also bought from a stall on the same corner.

**LOKL** **INTERNATIONAL, MALAY \$\$**  
(Map p50; http://loklcoffee.com; 30 Jln Tun HS Lee; mains RM14-20; ☎) From its clever name (pronounced 'local') and slick design to its tasty twists on comfort foods, such as their cholesterol bomb deep-fried Hainanese meatloaf sandwich and dessert toasties, **LOKL** ticks all the right boxes. Their local coffee comes from Khuang, their Western-style brews are lily.

**Purple Cane Tea Restaurant** **CHINESE \$\$**  
(Map p50; ☎2272 3090; www.purplecane.com.my; 1 Jln Maharajalela; mains RM10-20; ☎11am-10pm) Tucked behind the Chinese Assembly Hall, this laid-back place uses tea as an ingredient in most of its dishes. Intriguing specials include chicken soup with tea and ginseng,

and beef simmered in lychee tea. There are also branches in Mid Valley Megamall and the Shaw Centre near Pudu.

**Sing Seng Nam** **CHINESE \$**  
(Map p50; 2 Medan Pasar; mains RM5-10; ☎7am-5pm Mon-Sat) KL is fast filling up with new 'old-style' *kopitiam* (coffee shop), but this is the genuine object, busy with locals enjoying breakfast of *kaya* (coconut-cream jam) toast and runny boiled egg or a *kopi peng* (iced coffee with milk). Later in the day, tuck into inexpensive bowls of chicken rice and 'curry fish'.

**Sangeetha** **INDIAN, THALI \$**  
(Map p50; ☎2032 3333; 65 Lebu Ampang; meals RM10; ☎8am-11pm; ☎) This well-run vegetarian restaurant serves lots of South Indian delights such as *idli* (savoury, soft, fermented-rice-and-lentil cakes) and *masala dosa* (rice-and-lentil crepes stuffed with spiced potatoes).

**LITTLE INDIA & KAMPUNG BARU**  
**Saravanaa Bhavan** **INDIAN \$\$**  
(Map p50; ☎2287 1228; www.saravanabhavan.com; 52 Jln Maarof, Bangsar; meals RM10-20; ☎8am-11pm; ☎) This global chain of restaurants offers some of the best quality Indian food you'll find in KL. Their banana-leaf and mini-tiffin feasts are supremely tasty and you can also sample southern Indian classics such as *masala dosa*.

**Thai-la** **THAI \$\$**  
(Map p56; ☎2698 4933; ground fl, Cap Square; meals RM20-30; ☎noon-10pm Mon-Sat) The food's tasty and made by Thai chefs, the decor has a chic charm and Zaki, the entertaining owner, can talk the hind legs off a donkey.

**Sagar** **INDIAN \$**  
(Map p56; ☎2691 3088; Jln Masjid India, Semua House; meals RM10; ☎8am-8pm) Enjoy the good-value *thali* meals (rice or bread served with assorted vegetables and curries for under RM10) at this footpath cafe, and soak up the street life of Little India. There's also an air-con section inside.

**Ikan Bakar Berempah** **HAWKER \$**  
(Map p56; Jln Raja Muda Musa, Gerak Pak Lang; meals RM5-10; ☎24hr) If you can't make it to Kampung Baru for its Saturday *pasar malam* (night market), head to this excellent barbecued-fish stall, within a hawker-stall market covered by a zinc roof. Once you've picked your fish off the grill there's a long buffet of great Malay *kampung*-style side dishes you can add to it.

# Regional Specialities

Chillies at Bazaar Baru Chow Kit (p67), Kuala Lumpur





**Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei are a hungry traveller's dream destination – a multiethnic region boasting a wide-ranging cuisine shaped over the centuries by the European, Indonesian, Indian and Chinese traders, colonisers and labourers who have landed on its shores. Fancy breakfasting on Chinese dim sum? How about an Indian *dosa* (savoury pancake) for lunch, followed by a selection of rich Malaysian curries for dinner?**

If the region has any single culinary constant at all, it's undoubtedly noodles. But even these differ from country to country and coast to coast. *Laksam*, the Kelantanese take on laksa, combines fantastically toothsome wide, flat rice noodles in *budu*-spiked coconut milk and topped with bean sprouts and herbs, while

in Sarawak laksa is breakfast food: locals wake to a spicy, coconut-rich curry soup packed with rice vermicelli, omelette strips, chicken and prawns. In Penang, Hokkien mee is a spicy noodle soup with bean sprouts, pork and prawns, but elsewhere it's a mound of thick stir-fried noodles with pork and cabbage in a dark soy sauce.

Rice also features prominently across the region. *Nasi lemak*, an unofficial 'national dish' of Malaysia, is rice steamed with coconut milk and topped with *ikan bilis*, peanuts, cucumber, sweet-hot *sambal* paste and hard-boiled egg (curry optional); banana leaf rice – rice and curry served on a banana leaf 'plate' – is daily Indian fare.

Penang is generally regarded as the region's gastronomic ground zero; some KL residents make the four-hour drive for a single meal, and Singaporeans pack out hotels on weekends. Along with regional Chinese, southern Indian and Malay specialties, the island is a hotspot for Nonya cooking, born of intermarriage between Chinese immigrants and local women. In the former Portuguese outpost

#### **Clockwise from top left**

- 1** Food stalls in Chinatown (p72), Kuala Lumpur **2** Stall at Central Market (p279), Kota Bharu, Peninsular Malaysia  
**3** Penang Hokkien mee





of Melaka you'll find *Cristang* (a blend of Portuguese and local cooking styles) dishes like *debal*, a fiery Eurasian stew.

If it's all a bit too overwhelming, head to the peninsular east coast, the heartland of traditional Malay cooking. Kelantan and Terengganu, considerably isolated from the rest of the country, received few Chinese and Indian immigrants. Consequently, regional specialities have remained staunchly Malay. Graze the region long enough and you may develop a few cavities; local cooks excel at making all manner of *kuih* and even savoury dishes have a noticeably sweet edge.

If you'd like to diverge from the local cuisine entirely, then look no farther than Singapore; its high-end dining scene is second to none in Southeast Asia. Here you'll sate your craving for handmade papardelle, steak frites, fresh sashimi or a molecular gastronomic morsel snap-frozen in liquid nitrogen and bedecked with foam.

Given the endless choices, gastronomic malaise is unlikely to be a problem. It's a blessing, but also a curse – so many dishes, so little time.



# Penang

Penang is known for its Nonya or Peranakan cuisine, a fusion of Chinese, Malay and Indian ingredients and cooking techniques. Examples include *kerabu beehoon*, rice vermicelli tossed with *sambal* and lime juice and garnished with fresh herbs, and *otak otak*, curried fish 'custard' steamed in a banana leaf.

This is also the home of *nasi kandar*, rice eaten with a variety of curries, a *mamak* (Indian Muslim) speciality named after the *kandar* (shoulder pole) from which ambulant vendors once suspended their pots of rice and curry.

Penang's hawker food is a must. Wide, flat *kway teow* noodles are stir-fried with prawns, cockles, egg and bean sprouts for the hawker speciality *char kway teow*. Other don't-miss dishes include the laksa twins: *asam* (round rice noodles in a hot and sour fish gravy topped with slivered pineapple, cucumber, mint leaves and slightly astringent torch ginger flower) and *lemak* (with a coconut milk-based broth).

# Kedah, Perlis & Perak

Thai culinary influence extends to foods in Malaysia's west-coast states of Perlis and Kedah, where fish sauce is as common a seasoning as *belacan* (fermented prawn paste). Here, look for laksa *utara*, a lighter but still spicy and intensely fish-flavoured version of Penang's *asam* laksa.

Farther south is Ipoh, the mostly Chinese capital of Perak state and a town with a reputation for excellent eating. Pasta lovers rave over Ipoh's rice noodles, said to derive their exceptional silky smoothness from the town's water. Judge for yourself with the local version of Hainanese chicken – served with a side of barely blanched bean sprouts and noodles instead of rice – and *hor fun*, rice noodle soup with shredded chicken breast.

## Clockwise from top left

**1** Frying up noodles in George Town (p167), Penang **2** Red Garden Food Paradise & Night Market (p170), George Town, Penang **3** *Asam* laksa **4** Noodles on Gurney Drive (p170), George Town, Penang



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2

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3

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## Melaka

Melaka's specialties include *ayam pong teh* (chicken cooked with *taucu*, dark soy sauce and sugar), *ikan cili garam* (fish curry), *satay celup* (skewered meat, seafood, and vegetables cooked at the table in a tub of peanut-based sauce) and Hainanese chicken served with rice moulded into balls.

Often overlooked here is Cristang cuisine, the edible result of intermarriage between Portuguese colonisers and local women and an intriguing blend of Chinese/Peranakan, Indian, Malay and, of course, European ingredients.

## Johor & Pahang

Johor state boasts two tasty Malay noodle specialties: *mee bandung*, yellow noodles topped with a zippy, tomatoey shrimp gravy; and *mee rebus*, the same type of noodles doused with a sweet-savoury sauce thickened with sweet potatoes. The state also has its own variation on the laksa theme, consisting of noodles in a thin spicy fish gravy topped with chopped fresh herbs.

Pahang's rivers are known for *ikan patin*, known in English as silver catfish, a freshwater fish that's a local delicacy.

## Kelantan & Terengganu

Kelantan state's capital Kota Bharu boasts Malaysia's most beautiful wet market, as well as plenty of places to try specialties like *ayam percik* (chilli paste-marinated chicken, grilled and doused with coconut sauce) and visually arresting *nasi kerabu*, rice tinted blue with natural colouring obtained from dried pea flowers.

In Terengganu state, a vendor dishing up mounds of red rice signals *nasi dagang*. The slightly nut-flavoured grain is cooked with coconut water and eaten with fried chicken and *sambal*.



### Clockwise from top left

1 A noodle maker 2 *Ayam percik* (marinated chicken on skewers) 3 Central Market (p279), Kota Bharu, Kelantan











2

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## Kuala Lumpur, Selangor & Negeri Sembilan

Almost all of Malaysia's specialties can be found in Kuala Lumpur, but two dishes in particular are more easily found here than elsewhere: *pan meen* (literally 'board noodles'), thick and chewy wheat noodles tossed with dark soy and garnished with chopped pork, *ikan bilis* and shredded cloud ear mushrooms; and *sang har meen* ('fresh sea noodles'), huge freshwater prawns in gravy flavoured with rice wine and prawn fat served over crispy noodles.

Farther south, in Negeri Sembilan state, descendants of Minangkabau who immigrated from the Indonesian island of Sumatra hundreds of years ago dish up a mean *nasi padang* – rice accompanied by a parade of fiery curries, *gulai* (fish and vegetables cooked in mild coconut milk gravy), soups and *sambal*.

## Singapore

Singapore's culinary landscape is a near replica of Malaysia's, but in miniature. Still, Singaporeans do lay special claim to a few dishes, including crab stir-fried with black pepper, and fried carrot cake (squares of radish-flour cake stir-fried with bean sprouts, chilli sauce and salted radish). *Kari kepala ikan* (fish-head curry) was allegedly invented by a Singaporean-Indian cook playing to the Chinese love of fish cheeks. Hainanese chicken-rice, a plate of rice flavoured with garlic, broth, tender poached chicken, sliced cucumber and dipping sauces, assumes similarly iconic status here.

Singaporeans love their *roti prata* (the equivalent of Malaysia's *roti canai*) for breakfast, and have their own version of laksa – simply called 'laksa' – noodles in a prawn and coconut-milk-based, highly spiced soup.



3

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### Clockwise from top left

1 Street snacks, Chinatown (p72), Kuala Lumpur  
2 Hawker stalls backed by the Petronas Towers, Kuala Lumpur 3 Hainanese chicken-rice 4 Laksa

## Borneo (Sarawak & Sabah)

Sarawak's highlanders specialise in dishes cooked in bamboo, like the chicken dish *ayam pansoh* (a special occasion dish of chicken wrapped in tapioca leaves and cooked with water inside a length of bamboo).

If you're in Kota Kinabalu, consider splurging on a meal of bounty from the South China Sea, chosen by your own self from a fish tank and cooked to order at one of the city's many seafood restaurants. Two other piscine specialties that deserve a mention: *umai* (sometimes called *hinava*, and also found in Sarawak), raw fish seasoned simply with lime juice, coconut milk and chillies, served along with noodles made of fish paste in a magnificent seafood broth with fish balls and chunks of sea bass.

## Brunei

If Brunei had a national dish it would be *ambuyat*, a glutinous mass made from the pith of the sago tree, ground to a powder and mixed with water. Served by twisting around chopsticks or long-twined forks, *ambuyat* is usually dipped into *cahah*, a *sambal belacan* and tamarind-based sweet-and-tart sauce, and accompanied by boiled or smoked seafood and salads. *Ambuyat* itself doesn't have a taste – it's the sauce that gives it its zing. Shrimp-and-chilli mixes are the most popular, although you can technically dip the dish in anything you'd like (we've heard of people using vanilla ice cream!).

If you are invited to a Bruneian home you'll probably be served *bualulu* with your tea. This simple dessert is made from eggs, flour and sugar. *Kuripit sagu*, a biscuit-like version of *buahulu*, is jazzed up with mild coconut flavours.

### Clockwise from top left

1 *Pulut panggang* (glutinous-rice sweet wrapped in banana leaves) 2 Grilling chicken, Kota Kinabalu (p306), Sabah



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## LAKE GARDENS &amp; BRICKFIELDS



## Robson Heights

CHINESE \$\$\$

(📍2274 1633; [www.robsonheights.com](http://www.robsonheights.com); 10B Jln Permai, off Jln Syed Putra; mains RM30-60; ☎10.30am-2.30pm & 5.30-11.30pm) Top-class food is served at this rickety hillside joint. While specialities such as stir-fried pig intestines with dried prawn and chilli or braised terapin may not appeal to all, we can vouch for their delicious baked spare ribs in honey sauce and stir-fried udon noodles in black pepper sauce (RM8).

## Annalakshmi

INDIAN \$

(Map p54; 📍2272 3799; 116 Jln Berhala, Temple of Fine Arts; lunch RM12; ☎11.30am-3pm & 6.30-10pm Tue-Sun; 🍴) The fancy main restaurant charges for its tasty vegetarian cuisine with a daily lunch buffet (a good deal for RM12). It's next to the car park beneath the building. It's still 'eat as you wish, give as you feel' at their simpler Annalakshmi Riverside operation.

## Vishalatchi

INDIAN \$

(Map p54; 📍2274 4755; 18 Jln Scott; meals RM5; ☎7.30am-10.30pm; 🍴) Great banana-leaf meals of spicy southern Indian food are served up at this long-running Brickfields favourite. Good for tiffin snacks and a refreshing lassi, too.

## Yogitree

MALAY, WESTERN \$\$\$

(📍2282 6763; [www.yogitree.com](http://www.yogitree.com); 1st fl, Jln Syed Putra; meals RM20-70; ☎10am-10pm) We love anywhere that serves breakfast until 6pm. This 'real food' cafe and yoga clothing boutique, located in the Mid Valley Megamall, uses plenty of organic produce in its mix-and-match local and Western food menu.

## Kompleks Makan Tanglin

HAWKER \$

(Map p54; Jln Cendrasari, Lake Gardens; meals RM10; ☎7am-4pm Mon-Sat) Yet another good reason for hanging out in the Lake Gardens is the chance to grab a meal at this hawker-stall complex – **Ikan Bakar Pak Din's stall** is a popular one.

## BANGSAR BARU



## Rebung

MALAY \$\$\$

(📍2283 2119; [www.rebung.com.my](http://www.rebung.com.my); 4-2 Lorong Maarof; buffet RM50; ☎11am-11pm; 🍴) The flamboyant celebrity chef Ismail runs the show at this excellent Malay restaurant, one of KL's best, respected for its authenticity and consistency. The buffet spread is splendid with all kinds of dishes that you'd typically

## DON'T MISS

## NIGHT MARKETS

The best time to visit Little India is during the Saturday *pasar malam* (night market) on Lg Tuanku Abdul Rahman, the alley between Jln TAR and Jln Masjid India. From midafternoon, this narrow lane becomes crammed with food stalls serving excellent Malaysian, Indian and Chinese food.

Kampung Baru's Saturday *pasar malam* – called the Sunday Market because it runs into the early hours of Sunday morning – is also worth attending. The main action here is focused at the end of Jln Raja Alang, not far from the LRT station.

Bangsar Baru's *pasar malam* is held each Sunday night in the car park off Jln Telawi 1. Sample wonderful spicy-sour *asam laksa*, freshly made *popiah* (spring rolls) and crepe-like *apam balik*.

only be served in a Malay home, such as *onde onde* (glutinous rice balls filled with jaggery) made freshly. Check their website for details of their cooking classes.



## Sri Nirwana Maju

INDIAN \$\$

(Map p84; 📍2287 8445; 43 Jln Telawi 2; meals RM10-20; ☎7am-2am) There are far flashier Indian restaurants in Bangsar, but who cares about the decor when you can tuck into food this good and cheap? This place serves it all from roti for breakfast to banana-leaf curries throughout the day.

## Wondermama

MALAY \$\$

(Map p84; 📍2284 9821; [www.facebook.com/mywondermama](http://www.facebook.com/mywondermama); Bangsar Village I, 1 Jln Telawi 1, Bangsar Baru; mains RM14-24; ☎9am-10.30pm; 🍴) Traditional meets contemporary at this design savvy two-level space serving Malay comfort foods and burgers with a creative twist.

## Delicious

WESTERN \$\$

(Map p84; 📍2287 1554; [www.delicious.com.my](http://www.delicious.com.my); ground fl, Jln Telawi 1, Bangsar Village II; mains from RM40; ☎11am-midnight Sun-Thu, to 1am Fri & Sat) Serving healthy salads, pasta, sandwiches and pies among many other things in a cool contemporary setting. Apart from this buzzing branch you'll find others near KLCC and in the Mid Valley Megamall.



### Alexis Bistro

MALAY, WESTERN \$\$

(Map p84; ☎2284 2880; www.alexis.com.my; Jln Telawi 3, Bangsar Baru; mains from RM30; ☺noon-midnight Sun-Thu, to 1am Fri & Sat) Consistently good food is delivered at this Bangsar stalwart where Asian favourites such as Sarawak laksa (the owner is originally from this Malaysian state) mix it up with European fare.

### Chawan

MALAY \$

(Map p84; ☎2287 5507; 69-G Jln Telawi 3; mains RM5-10; ☺8am-midnight) A chic contemporary take on a *kopitiam*, offering megastrength coffees from all of the country's states to wash down dishes such as beef rendang and a brown-paper-wrapped *nasi lemak*.

### Les Deux Garçons

PATISSERIE \$\$

(Map p84; ☎2284 7833; www.lesdeuxgarcons.com.my; 36 Jln Telawi, Bangsar Baru; macarons & cakes RM5-20; ☺11am-8pm) Divine macarons (try

## Bangsar Baru

### Eating

- 1 Alexis Bistro .....B2
- 2 Bangsar Fish Head Corner.....A3
- 3 Chawan.....B2
- 4 Chelo's Appam Stall .....A4
- 5 Delicious.....B2
- 6 Les Deux Garçons .....A2
- 7 Nam Chuan Coffee Shop .....A4
- 8 Restaurant Mahbub .....A3
- 9 Sri Nirwana Maju .....B2
- 10 Wondermama.....A3

### Drinking

Upstairs @ Alexis Telawi ..... (see 1)

### Shopping

- 11 Bangsar Village I & II.....B2
- 12 Dude & the Duchess.....B2
- 13 Lasting Impressions.....B2
- 14 Never Follow Suit.....B2
- 15 Silverfish Books.....A2
- 16 Valentine Willie Fine Art.....B1

the wasabi and jasmine flavours) and beautiful cakes are served along with coffee at this tiny, pristine patisserie.

### Restaurant Mahbub

INDIAN \$\$

(Map p84; ☎2095 5382; www.restoranmahbub.com; 17 Lg Ara Kiri 1; mains RM6-12; ☺7am-2am) Tables spill out onto the street from this long-running operation famous for its fragrant biryani rice and lucious honey chicken.

### The Bee

INTERNATIONAL \$\$

(☎673 6142; www.thebee.com.my; 36B, Level G2, Publika, Solaris Dutamas; mains RM15-20; ☺9am-midnight Mon-Thu, 9am-1am Fri, 10am-1am Sat, 10am-midnight Sun; ☎) Their burgers and sandwiches are the real deal and they have good salads, local gourmet ice creams and coffee brewed just right. A stage is well used for various free events including live gigs, film screenings and open mic nights.



### Drinking

Do you want bubble tea, iced *kopi-o*, a frosty beer or a flaming Lamborghini? KL's cafes, teahouses and bars can deliver it all. Changkat Bukit Bintang in the Golden Triangle continues to sizzle, offering a non-stop party practically every night. Unless otherwise noted standard opening hours are 5pm to 2am.

## GOLDEN TRIANGLE &amp; KLCC



## Palate Palette

CAFE

(Map p68; [www.palatepalette.com](http://www.palatepalette.com); 21 Jln Mesui; ☉noon-midnight Tue-Thu, to 2am Fri & Sat; ☎) Colourful, creative, quirky and super cool, this cafe-bar is our favourite place to eat, drink, play board games, and mingle with KL's boho crowd. The menu (mains RM10 to RM30) features dishes as diverse as shepherd's pie and teriyaki salmon. Check the website for details of events.



## Taps Beer Bar

CRAFT BEER

(Map p68; [www.tapsbeerbar.my/](http://www.tapsbeerbar.my/); One Residency, 1 Jln Nagansari; ☉5pm-1am; ☎) A very welcome addition to KL's drinking scene, Taps specialises in real ale from around the world with some 80 different microbrews on rotation, 14 of them on tap. Sample three for RM30. They have live acoustic music, too.



## Village Bar

BAR

(Map p68; Feast fl, Starhill Gallery, 181 Jln Bukit Bintang; ☉noon-1am) Columns of glasses and bottles and cascades of dangling lanterns lend an *Alice in Wonderland* quality to this basement bar.

## Paper + Toast

CAFE

(Map p68; ☎2141 6752; [www.paperandtoast.com](http://www.paperandtoast.com); One Residency, 1 Jln Nagansari; ☎) Decent coffee and snacks plus space for digital nomads to park their laptops, work and host meetings. We like that they encourage customers to bring their own containers for takeaway drinks and food.

## Teeq Brasserie

CAFE

(Map p68; ☎2782 3555; [www.teeq.com.my](http://www.teeq.com.my); Level 8, 50 Jln Sultan Ismail, Lot 10; ☉6.30-10.30pm, bar open to 1am Tue-Sun) Beside the rooftop garden of Lot 10 is this contemporary-styled brasserie with a relaxed alfresco bar from which you can observe the commercial frenzy of Bintang Walk at a calm distance.

## Neo Tamarind

BAR

(Map p68; [www.samadhiretreats.com](http://www.samadhiretreats.com); 19 Jln Sultan Ismail; ☉11.30am-2.30pm & 6.30-10.30pm) This sophisticated restaurant-bar feels like a slice of Bali smuggled into the heart of KL. Sip cocktails by flickering tealights under leafy trees.

## Luna

BAR

(Map p68; ☎2332 7777; Jln Punchak, Menara Pan-Global; ☉3pm-1am, to 3am Fri & Sat) You certainly get the twinkling view of KL's skyline right at this sophisticated rooftop bar surrounding

## WORTH A TRIP

## OLD-SCHOOL DINING

Each of these long-time survivors of KL's dining scene oozes retro charm as well as providing lip-smacking meals:

**Coliseum Cafe** (Map p56; ☎2692 6270; 100 Jln TAR; meals RM15-60; ☉10am-10pm)

Little has changed here since Somerset Maugham tucked into sizzling steaks and downed a G'n'T in the wood-panelled bar next door. A KL classic, not to be missed, they also serve Chinese food.

**Yut Kee** (Map p56; ☎2698 8108; 35 Jln Dang Wangi; meals RM10-15; ☉7.30am-4.45pm) It can get very busy at this beloved Hainanese *kopitiam*, but the staff remain calm and polite. House specialities include toast with homemade *kaya* (coconut-cream jam), *roti babi* (deep-fried bread filled with shredded pork and onions) or the fried Hokkien mee noodles. Their roast rolled pork with apple sauce, available from Friday to Sunday, usually sells out by 2.30pm.

**Sek Yuen** (Map p68; ☎9222 9457; 313-315 Pudu; mains RM20-40; ☉noon-3pm & 6-10pm Tue-Sun) Occupying the same time-worn, Art Deco building for the past 60 years, Sek Yuen serves up meals that offer an experience of KL food history. There's no written menu, but you can trust the aged chefs toiling in the wood-fired kitchen to make something delicious; try the *kau yoke* (belly pork), *char siew* (barbecued pork), fried rice and sweet-and-sour fish.

**Capital Cafe** (Map p56; 213 Jln TAR; dishes RM3.50-5; ☉7am-8.30pm Mon-Sat) Since it opened in 1956, this truly Malaysian cafe has had Chinese, Malays and Indians all working together. Try their excellent mee goreng, *rojak* or satay (only in the evening).

## DON'T MISS

## LUCKY GARDENS

South of Jln Ara, Bangsar's Lucky Gardens may not be as ritzy as the grid of Telawis, but locals love to hit the morning fruit and veg market here and it is blessed with some delicious and inexpensive dining options. Time your visit to the **Nam Chuan Coffee Shop** (Map p84; Lg Ara Kiri 2; ☺7am-10pm), a busy, no-frills food court, so you can enjoy a bowl of Christina Jong's fantastic Sarawak laksa (RM5). There's also a fantastic strip of outdoor hawker stalls along Lg Ara Kiri: sample vegan Indian delights at **Chelo's Appam Stall** (Map p84; RM5; ☺7am-10pm Mon-Sat; 🍴) and the tastebud explosion of **Bangsar Fish Head Corner** (Map p84; meals from RM30; ☺7am-4pm Mon-Sat).

a swimming pool. Also up here, inside and facing towards KL Tower, is the smoke-free **Cristallo**, a playboy-esque bar lined with silver velour sofas, and draped with strings of glittering crystals.

## Apartment Downtown

CAFE

(Map p56; 1st fl, Suria KLCC, Jln Ampang; ☺11am-10pm) Imagine you actually live at KLCC at this convivial lounge-like cafe-bar with outdoor seating overlooking the park – a lovely spot to revive after a hard day's shopping at the mall.

## Luk Yu Tea House

TEAHOUSE

(Map p68; 📍2782 3850; Feast fl, Starhill Gallery, 181 Jln Bukit Bintang; ☺10am-1am) Enjoy a premium brew inside a charming traditional Chinese teahouse along with dim sum and other dainty snacks.

## Sixty Nine Bistro

CAFE

(Map p68; 14 Jln Kampung Dollah; ☺noon-1.30am, from 2pm Fri & Sat) A very funky youth venue that has a junk-shop chic vibe to its decor, a fun menu of bubble teas and the like, and resident fortune tellers.

## Sky Bar

BAR

(Map p68; 📍2332 9888; Level 33, Traders Hotel; ☺7pm-1am, to 3am Fri & Sat) Head to the rooftop pool area of this hotel for a grand view across to the Petronas Towers – it's the perfect spot for sundowner cocktails or late-night flutes of bubbly.

## Starhill Tea Salon

TEAHOUSE

(Map p68; 📍2719 8550; Starhill Gallery, 181 Jln Bukit Bintang; ☺10am-1am) Grand columns created from tea caddies and luxurious sofas set an elegant tone for this tea salon appropriately sited on Starhill Gallery's 'Indulge' floor. Afternoon tea (3pm to 5pm) is RM70 for two.

## CHINATOWN

## Bar Art @ The Warehouse

BAR

(Map p50; www.thewarehouse.com.my; 198 Jln Tun HS Lee; ☺10am-1am Tue-Sun; 🍴) Showing potential is this newish operation that combines a so-so art gallery with a cafe-bar and steak restaurant (upstairs). Wednesday's open mic night and Thursday's mixology cocktail sessions provide a break from the usual Chinatown scene.

## Reggae Bar

BAR

(Map p50; www.reggaebarkl.com.my; 158 Jln Tun HS Lee; ☺10.30am-3am) Travellers gather in droves at this pumping bar in the thick of Chinatown, which has outdoor seats if you'd like to catch the passing parade. There are beer promos, pool tables and pub grub served till late.

## Moontree House

CAFE

(Map p50; www.moontree-house.blogspot.com; 1st fl, 6 Jln Panggong; ☺10am-8pm Wed-Mon; 🍴) Quiet space for a coffee, also sells cute hand-icrafts and feminist literature.

## Purple Cane Tea House

TEAHOUSE

(Map p50; 3rd fl, 6 Jln Panggong; ☺11am-8pm) Serves a broad range of Chinese green and jasmine teas; their tea shop is around the corner on Jln Sultan.

## BANGSAR BARU

## Upstairs @ Alexis Telawi

BAR

(Map p84; 📍2284 2880; www.alexis.com.my; 29 Jln Telawi 3; ☺6pm-1am, to 2am Fri & Sat) Bangsar's most chilled-out drinking spot. Sink into comfortable chairs and relax to the soothing sounds on the decks. Live jazz is free on the first Monday of the month.

## Social

BAR

(Map p68; 📍2282 2260; 57-59 Jln Telawi 3; ☺10pm-2am) Classy sports bar offering pool tables and good food as well as drinks. There's also a branch on Changkat Bukit Bintang.

## ★ Entertainment

KL's entertainment options include a wide range of live music, theatre and dance.

Mainstream movies are screened at the multiplexes in the malls. Tickets are around RM12. Cultural centres occasionally screen art-house films. There's a lively but fluid clubbing scene; stay up to date by reading *Time Out* or *Juice*. Clubs are typically open Wednesday to Sunday and usually charge a cover (including one drink) of RM20 to RM50 Thursday to Saturday.

### **TOP CHOICE** Dewan Filharmonik Petronas

CONCERT HALL

(Map p56; ☎2051 7007; www.mpo.com.my; Box Office, Tower 2, Petronas Towers; tickets RM10-210; ☎box office 10am-6pm Mon-Sat) Don't miss the chance to attend a concert at this gorgeous concert hall at the base of the Petronas Towers. The polished Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra plays here (usually Friday and Saturday evenings and Sunday matinees, but also other times) as well as other local and international ensembles. There is a dress code.

### **TOP CHOICE** No Black Tie

LIVE MUSIC

(Map p68; ☎2142 3737; www.noblacktie.com.my; 17 Jln Mesui; cover RM20-50; ☎5pm-2am Tue-Sun) Blink and you'd miss this small chic live-music venue, bar and Japanese bistro, as it's hidden behind a grove of bamboo. NBT, as it's known to its fans, is owned by Malaysian concert pianist Evelyn Hii who has a knack for finding talented singer-songwriters, jazz bands and classical-music ensembles who play here from around 9.30pm.

### **Zouk Club**

CLUB

(Map p56; www.zoukclub.com; 113 Jln Ampang; ☎Zouk 10pm-late Wed, Fri & Sat, Phuture 9pm-late Wed, Fri & Sat, Velvet Underground 9pm-late Wed-Sat, Wine Bar 6pm-2am Tue, to 3am Wed & Thu, to 4am Fri & Sat) KL's top club offers spaces to suit everyone and a great line-up of local and international DJs. As well as the two-level main venue, there's the more sophisticated Velvet Underground (which is also the venue for the popular monthly Time Out KL stand-up comedy nights), with a dance floor that's glitter-ball heaven, Phuture for hip-hop and the cutting-edge Bar Sonic.

### **Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre**

PERFORMING ARTS

(klpac; ☎4047 9000; www.klpac.com; Jln Strachan, Sentul Park; tickets RM20-300) Part of the Sentul West regeneration project, this modernist performing-arts complex puts on a wide range of progressive theatrical events. Combine a show with a stroll in peaceful Sentul Park and dinner at Yu Ri Tei, beside the Sentul Park Koi Centre.

### **Actors Studio@Lot 10**

THEATRE

(☎2142 2009; www.theactorsstudio.com.my; 50 Jln Sultan Ismail, Lot 10) Apart from staging shows at klpac, the Actors Studio theatre and comedy group has its base at this splendid, state-of-the-art venue located on the roof of Lot 10. Other theatre and dance companies also get to put on shows here. Prices depend on the performance.

## **GAY & LESBIAN KUALA LUMPUR**

Check out [www.utopia-asia.com](http://www.utopia-asia.com) and [www.fridae.com](http://www.fridae.com) for the latest on KL's small but friendly gay scene.

Friday is the official gay night at **Frangipani Bar** (Map p68; ☎2144 3001; 25 Jln Changkat Bukit Bintang; cover Fri RM30; ☎5pm-1am Tue-Thu & Sun, 5pm-3am Fri & Sat), above the restaurant of the same name. On other nights of the week, you'll find a very gay-friendly crowd here, too.

Friday and Saturday nights are when **Marketplace** (Map p56; ☎2166 0750; www.marketplacekl.com; 4A Lg Yap Kwan Seng; cover Sat RM35; ☎Sat 10pm-3am) welcomes the rainbow crowd. There's a superb view of the Petronas Towers from the restaurant's spacious rooftop, which provides a respite from the body-to-body action on the cramped dancefloor.

Sip creative cocktails such as 'I Am Curious, Orange' and 'Crayons are Attractive' at the gay-owned modern British-themed restaurant and bar **Albion KL** (Map p68; ☎2141 9282; www.albionkl.com; 31 Jln Berangan; ☎noon-3pm, 5-11pm Tue-Sat, noon-10.30pm Sun).

Still going after donkey's years is **Blue Boy** (Map p68; ☎2142 1067; 54 Jln Sultan Ismail; ☎8.30pm-2am). Forget decor – it's all about karaoke with the winking lady boys, and the crowds of rent boys and their admirers.

## DANCE & CULTURAL SHOWS

If you'd like to see and hear traditional Malaysian dances and music, there are good shows at the Malaysian Tourism Centre (p91) at 3pm Tuesday to Thursday and 8.30pm Saturday. There's also an evening dance show at 8.30pm daily in the attached restaurant **Saloma** (Map p56; ☎2161 0122; show only RM40, buffet & show RM75).

The tourist restaurant **Seri Melayu** (Map p68; ☎2145 1833; www.serimelayu.com; 1 Jln Conlay) also offers live performances of traditional music and dance. Drop by the information desk at Central Market as there are sometimes free cultural events staged here, too.

### KL Live

LIVE MUSIC

(Map p68; www.kl-live.com.my; 1st fl, 20 Jln Sultan Ismail, Life Centre) One of the best things to happen to KL's live-music scene in a while has been the opening of this spacious venue, which has been packing in rock and pop fans with an impressive line-up of overseas and local big-name artists and DJs.

### The Venue

LIVE MUSIC

(Map p68; ☎2143 3022; www.thevenue.com.my; Connection level 4, Pavilion KL, 168 Jln Bukit Bintang; ☎6.30pm-12.30am) Specialising mainly in jazz, this new spot in the Pavilion provides a classy performance space for artists from around the region. The first set starts at 9.45pm.

### Wings

CAFE-BAR

(Map p68; www.wingsmusicafe.com; 16 Jln Kampung Dollah; ☎6.30am-1am, to 2am Fri & Sat) A few doors down from Sixty Nine Bistro, this cheerful student hangout has regular live music, though most drinkers prefer to chill out on the front terrace.

### Doppel Kafe

LIVE MUSIC

(Map p50; ☎017-200 8631; www.facebook.com/DoppelKL; Central Market Annexe, Jln Hang Kasturi; ☎noon-9pm Sun-Thu, noon-1am Fri & Sat; ☎) Local bands and singers perform on an ad-hoc basis at this laid-back cafe-bar on the mezzanine floor. It also sells a small selection of CDs and occasionally hosts music swap-meets.

## Golden Screen Cinemas

CINEMA

(Map p68; ☎8312 3456; www.gsc.com.my; Level 6, Pavilion KL, 168 Jln Bukit Bintang) Book a seat in Gold Class (RM40) for reclining chairs and drinks service.

## Tanjung Golden Village

CINEMA

(Map p56; ☎7492 2929; www.tgv.com.my; Level 3, Suria KLCC) Tanjung Golden Village is Kuala Lumpur's most convenient multiscreen cinema located smack bang in the City Centre at Suria KLCC, a six-storey shopping extravaganza at the foot of the Petronas Towers.

## Sutra Dance Theatre

DANCE

(Map p59; ☎4021 1092; www.sutrafoundation.org.my; 12 Persiaran Titiwangsa 3) The home of Malaysian dance legend Ramli Ibrahim has been turned into a showcase for Indian classical dance, as well as a dance studio, gallery and cultural centre near Lake Titiwangsa. See the website for upcoming shows.

## Istana Budaya

PERFORMING ARTS

(National Theatre; Map p59; ☎4026 5555; www.istanabudaya.gov.my; Jln Tun Razak; tickets RM100-300) Big-scale drama and dance shows are staged here, as well as music performances by the National Symphony Orchestra and National Choir. There's a dress code: no shorts, and men must wear long-sleeved shirts.



## Shopping

Take your pick from street markets proffering fake-label goods to glitzy shopping malls (all open 10am to 10pm) packed with the real deal. Clothing, camera gear, computers and electronic goods are all competitively priced. You'll also find original handicrafts from all over the country as well as contemporary art. The shops in the National Textiles Museum (p52) and Islamic Arts Museum (p53) are both packed with appealing items.

## GOLDEN TRIANGLE & KLCC



### Pavilion KL

MALL

(Map p68; www.pavilion-kl.com; 168 Jln Bukit Bintang) Pavilion sets the gold standard in KL's shopping scene. Amid the many familiar international luxury labels, there are some good local retail options, including branches of the fashion houses **British India**; **MS Read** for larger-sized gals; **Salabianca** and **Philosophy for Men** for fun casual wear. Their basement food court is excellent and for a quick trip to Japan head to **Tokyo Street** on the 6th floor.



**Sungei Wang Plaza**

(Map p68; [www.sungeiawang.com](http://www.sungeiawang.com); Jln Sultan Ismail) This ragbag of retail fun promises 'all kinds of everything' and you'd better believe it. Connected with **BB Plaza**, Sungei Wang is confusing to navigate but jam-packed with youth-oriented fashions and accessories. Teens and youthful fashionistas should hunt out **HK Station** on the 6th floor.

MALL

**Suria KLCC**

(Map p56; [www.suriaklcc.com.my](http://www.suriaklcc.com.my); Jln Ampang) Even if shopping bores you to tears, you're sure to find something to interest you at this fine shopping complex at the foot of the Petronas Towers. Amid the usual plethora of international lables, look out for the following local business: **Pucuk Rebung** (level 3) for upmarket arts, crafts and antiques; **iKAR-RTini** (level 2) for batik design fashions with separate men's and women's outlets; and **Aseana** (ground level) for fancy party frocks. There's also an excellent branch of the bookshop **Kinokuniya** (level 4), scores of restaurants and cafes, two food courts, a cinema, gallery and a kids' museum.

MALL

**Starhill Gallery**

(Map p68; [www.starhillgallery.com](http://www.starhillgallery.com); 181 Jln Bukit Bintang) Break out the platinum charge card – this glitzy mall is the domain of exclusive fashion brands including Louis Vuitton, Salvatore Ferragamo, Alfred Dunhill and – hmmm – British department store Debenhams? The basement level is a virtual village of upmarket restaurants. Beautiful batik prints can be bought from **Jendela** ('Explore' floor).

MALL

**Kompleks Budaya Kraf**

(Map p63; ☎2162 7533; [www.malaysiancraft.com](http://www.malaysiancraft.com); Jln Conlay; ☉9am-8pm Mon-Fri, to 7pm Sat & Sun) A government enterprise, this huge complex mainly caters to coach tours, but it's worth a visit to browse the shops and stalls selling batik, wood carvings, pewter, basketware, glassware and ceramics. You can see craftspeople and artists at work in the surrounding **Art Colony**. The complex also has a small museum and offers batik-making courses.

ARTS &amp; CRAFTS

**Plaza Low Yat**

(Map p68; [www.plazalowyat.com](http://www.plazalowyat.com); 7 Jln Bintang, off Jln Bukit Bintang) KL's best IT mall, packed with six floors of retailers big and small offering deals on laptops, digital cameras, mobile phones, computer peripherals and accessories. If you can't find what you need

ELECTRONICS

here (in particular electronic parts) then scout around the stalls in nearby **Imbi Plaza** (Map p68; Jln Imbi; ☉11am-9pm).

**Berjaya Times Square**

(Map p68; ☎2117 3081; [www.timesquarekl.com](http://www.timesquarekl.com); 1 Jln Imbi) Teen fashions and toy stores abound at this mammoth mall. The **Metro-jaya** department store has good deals on clothes and there's a big branch of **Borders** bookstore on level 2. The centre also has a bowling alley, karaoke, fish spa, cinema and an indoor theme park.

MALL

**CHINATOWN****TOP CHOICE Peter Hoe Evolution**

HOME DECOR

(Map p50; 2 Jln Hang Lekir; ☉10am-7pm) Both here and at the much bigger **Peter Hoe Beyond** (Map p50; 2nd fl, Lee Rubber Bldg, 145 Jln Tun HS Lee; ☉10am-7pm) around the corner you can satisfy practically all your gift-and-souvenir-buying needs, with selections from the KL-based designer's creative and affordable range of original batik designs on sarongs, shirts and dresses, and home furnishings. The Beyond branch has a cafe that's worth visiting in its own right and the atelier of **Justin Yap** ([www.justinyap.com](http://www.justinyap.com)), one of Malaysia's rising fashion stars.

**Central Market**

MARKET

([www.centralmarket.com.my](http://www.centralmarket.com.my); Jln Hang Kasturi, Pasar Seni; ☉10am-9pm) It's easy to spend an hour or more wandering around this treasure house of souvenirs, batik, kites, clothes and jewellery. Asian artifacts and antiques are also available, but you'll need to bargain hard to get good deals; **Art House Gallery Museum of Ethnic Arts** in the annex has interesting pieces from Borneo and Tibet.

**BANGSAR BARU & BRICKFIELDS****TOP CHOICE Never Follow Suit**

FASHION

(Map p84; ☎2284 7316; 28-2, Jln Telawi 2, Bangsar Baru) You're guaranteed to find something special at this extraordinary boutique hidden away on the 2nd floor. New and upcycled clothes and accessories are displayed like art works in a hipster, shabby-chic gallery.

**TOP CHOICE Bangsar Village I & II**

MALL

(Map p84; [www.bangsarvillage.com](http://www.bangsarvillage.com); cnr Jln Telawi 1 & Jln Telawi 2) These twin malls – linked by a covered bridge – offer upmarket fashions, including international brands and local Malaysian designers, such as Richard Tsen at **Dude & the Duchess** (Map p84; upper ground fl,

Bangsar Village II), which marries tailored fits and design to interesting fabric choices, or Shuenkee Chong at leathergoods shop **Thirtyfour** (<http://thirtyfour.net>). Asian interior-design shop **Lasting Impressions** (Map p84; [www.lasting-impressions.com.my](http://www.lasting-impressions.com.my); 2nd fl Bangsar Village II) has great decorative pieces.

### Mid Valley Megamall

MALL

([www.midvalley.com.my](http://www.midvalley.com.my); Lingkaran Syed Putra) Mega is the only way to describe this enormous mall where you could easily lose yourself for days in the 300 stores, two department stores, 18-screen cinema, bowling alley, huge food court and even the colourful Hindu temple. For more upmarket shopping, the luxe **Gardens Mall** ([www.thegardens.com.my](http://www.thegardens.com.my); Mid Valley City, Lingkaran Syed Putra) is also part of the development. The KL Komuter Mid Valley station makes getting here a cinch. There are also Rapid KL buses to Chinatown and a free shuttle bus to Bangsar LRT station.

### Valentine Willie Fine Art

ART GALLERY

(Map p84; ☎2284 2348; [www.vwfa.net](http://www.vwfa.net); 17 Jln Telawi 3; ☉noon-8pm Mon-Fri, noon-6pm Sat) One of KL's best galleries has frequent shows and represents some of the country's top artists.

### Wei-Ling Gallery

ART GALLERY

(Map p54; [www.weiling-gallery.com](http://www.weiling-gallery.com); 8 Jln Scott; ☉noon-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat) The top two floors of this old shophouse have been imaginatively turned into a contemporary gallery to showcase local artists.

### Silverfish Books

BOOKS

(Map p84; ☎2284 4837; [www.silverfishbooks.com](http://www.silverfishbooks.com); 28-1 Jln Telawi; ☉10.30am-8.30pm Mon-Fri, to 6pm Sat) Good local bookshop and publisher of contemporary Malaysian literature and writing.

### ELSEWHERE

#### Royal Selangor

#### Pewter Factory

ARTS &amp; CRAFTS

(☎4145 6122; [www.visitorcentre.royalselangor.com](http://www.visitorcentre.royalselangor.com); 4 Jln Usahawan Enam; ☉9am-5pm) Located 8km northeast of the city centre, the world's largest pewter manufacturer offers some very appealing souvenirs made from this malleable alloy of lead and silver. You can try your own hand at creating a pewter dish at the **School of Hard Knocks** (p59). The factory has an interesting visitor centre (to get here, take the LRT to Wangsa Maju station and then a taxi), or you can visit the retail outlets in KL's malls including **Suria KLCC**.

### i Information

#### Immigration Offices

**Immigration Office** (☎2095 5077; Block I, Pusat Bandar Damansara; ☉8.30am-5pm Mon-Fri, closed 12.15-2.45pm Fri) Handles visa extensions; 2km west of Lake Gardens.

#### Internet Access

Internet cafes are everywhere; the going rate per hour is RM3. If you're travelling with a wi-fi-enabled device, you can get online at hundreds of cafes, restaurants, bars and several hotels for free.

### WORTH A TRIP

## PUBLIKA

Not all KL malls are equal. A five-minute taxi ride northwest of the Lake Gardens and Bangsar is **Publika** ([www.publika.com.my](http://www.publika.com.my); 1 Jln Dutamas, Solaris Dutamas), where contemporary art, culture, shopping and dining are combined to create what the creative team behind the mall like to call 'Manhattan'. The vibrant creativity and liberal vibe is certainly a striking contrast to the conservative Islamic high court and a giant mosque that are the complex's neighbours.

Low rents have encouraged new talents to open up shops, creative spaces and businesses in the mixed-use development. Dazzling murals in the food court, quirky themes for the toilets, a great kids' play space and inspirational quotes carved into the flagging of the public square all add to visual interest. Anchoring the basement space is the fabulous grocer **B.I.G.**, and there are plenty of great places to eat and drink including The Bee (p84).

Gallery spaces include **MAP**, where an interesting roster of events are held in the White and Black Box spaces. Free films are screened each Monday in the square, there's an interesting arts and crafts market on the last Sunday of the month, as well as other occasional events.

## Media

**Juice** ([www.juiceonline.com](http://www.juiceonline.com)) Free clubbing-oriented monthly magazine available in top-end hotels, restaurants and bars.

**Time Out** ([www.timeoutkl.com](http://www.timeoutkl.com); RM5) Monthly magazine in a globally familiar format; sign up online for their weekly 'what's going on' digest.

## Medical Services

Pharmacies are all over town; the most common is Guardian, located in most shopping malls.

**Hospital Kuala Lumpur** (☎2615 5555; [www.hkl.gov.my](http://www.hkl.gov.my); Jln Pahang) North of the city centre.

**Tung Shin Hospital** (☎2072 1655; <http://tungshin.com.my>; 102 Jln Pudu)

**Twin Towers Medical Centre KLCC** (☎2382 3500; [www.ttmcklcc.com.my](http://www.ttmcklcc.com.my); Level 4, Suria KLCC, Jln Ampang; ☎8.30am-6pm Mon-Sat)

## Money

You'll seldom be far from a bank/ATM. Moneychangers offer better rates than banks for changing cash and (at times) travellers cheques; they're usually open during later hours and on weekends and are found in shopping malls.

## Post

**Main Post Office** (Jln Raja Laut; ☎8.30am-6pm Mon-Sat, closed 1st Sat of month) Across the river from the Central Market.

## Tourist Information

**Malaysian Tourism Centre** (MaTic; ☎9235 4900; <http://matic.gov.my>; 109 Jln Ampang; ☎8am-10pm) Housed in a mansion built in 1935 for rubber and tin tycoon Eu Tong Seng, this is KL's most useful tourist office. Also hosts good cultural performances.



## Getting There & Away

### Air

KL's main airport is **Kuala Lumpur International Airport** (KLIA; ☎8777 8888; [www.klia.com.my](http://www.klia.com.my)), 75km south of the city centre at Sepang. AirAsia's flights are handled by the nearby **Low Cost Carrier Terminal** (LCCT; ☎8777 8888; <http://lcct.klia.com.my>), which will be replaced during 2013 by the new **KLIA2** (<http://klia2.org>) terminal.

Firefly and Berjaya Air flights go from **SkyPark Subang Terminal** (Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Airport; ☎7845 1717; [www.subangskypark.com](http://www.subangskypark.com)), around 20km west of the city centre.

### Bus

KL has several bus stations, the main one being Pudu Sentral (formerly Puduraya), just east of Chinatown. From here services fan out all over Peninsular Malaysia, as well as to Singapore and Thailand. The only long-distance destinations

that Pudu Sentral doesn't handle are Kuala Lipis and Jerantut (for access to Taman Negara) – buses to these places leave from Pekeliling bus station; and Kota Bharu and Kuala Terengganu, buses for which leave from Putra bus station.

Other long-distance bus services are operated by the following:

**Aeroline** (☎6258 8800; [www.aeroline.com.my](http://www.aeroline.com.my)) Daily services to Singapore (from RM90) and Penang (RM60) leave from outside the Corus Hotel, Jln Ampang, just east of KLCC.

**Nice** (☎2272 1586; [www.nice-coaches.com.my](http://www.nice-coaches.com.my)) Services run from outside the old KL Train Station on Jln Sultan Hishammuddin to Singapore (RM88, 10 daily), Penang (RM75, 7 daily), Butterworth (RM68, twice daily) and Melaka (RM27, twice daily) as well as other destinations.

**Transtar Travel** (☎2141 1771; [www.transtar.com.sg](http://www.transtar.com.sg)) Services go to Singapore (RM28 to RM90, depending on size of bus) and Penang (RM45) from 138 Jln Imbi, opposite Overseas Restaurant.

### PASIR SENI STATION

From beside Pasar Seni LRT station in Chinatown, frequent buses include U64, U65, U80 and U81 to Shah Alam (RM3), U91 to Klang (RM3), Cityliner bus 710 for Pelabuhan Klang (Port Klang; RM4), and U85, U87 and U88 to Petaling Jaya (RM3).

### PEKELILING BUS STATION

Next to Titiwangsa LRT and monorail stations, just off Jln Tun Razak. Buses leave here for Kuala Lipis (RM14.70, four hours, eight daily) and Raub (RM10.90, 2½ hours, six daily). Several companies including **Plusliner** ([www.plusliner.com](http://www.plusliner.com)) run services to Kuantan (RM22.10, four hours), which leave at two-hourly intervals between 8am and 8pm; many go via Temerloh (RM11.30). Buses to Jerantut (RM16.80, three hours) also go via Temerloh. Buses to Genting Highlands (RM6) leave every half-hour between 7am and 9.30pm.

### PUDU SENTRAL BUS STATION

Recently given a major facelift, this crowded bus station remains the kind of place you want to get in and out of quickly. The crowds provide plenty of cover for pickpockets and bag snatchers, and agents for various bus companies will pounce on you as soon as you enter. Close to the main entrance is an information counter. At the rear is a **left-luggage counter** (per day per bag RM3; ☎6am-midnight), as well as the tourist police.

Inside are dozens of bus company ticket-windows. Staff will shout out destinations, but check to be sure the departure time suits you as they sometimes try to sell tickets for buses that

## INTERSTATE BUS FARES FROM PUDU SENTRAL

DESTINATION	FARE (RM)	DURATION (HRS)
Alor Setar	40.20	5
Butterworth	31.40	4½
Cameron Highlands	35	4
Ipoh	17.50	2½
Johor Bahru	31.30	4
Kuantan	22.10	4
Lumut	24.80	4
Melaka	22.50	2
Mersing	30	5½
Penang	35.20	5
Singapore	88.50	5½
Sungai Petani	36.50	5
Taiping	24.80	3½

aren't leaving for many hours. Buses leave from numbered platforms in the basement.

On the main runs, services are so numerous that you can sometimes just turn up and get a seat on the next bus. However, tickets should preferably be booked at least the day before, and a few days before during peak holiday periods, especially to the Cameron Highlands and east-coast destinations, which only have a few daily services.

**Transnasional Express** (☎1300-888 582; [www.transnasional.com.my](http://www.transnasional.com.my)) is the largest operation here, with buses to almost all major destinations. Outside the terminal, on Jln Pudu, there are several private companies handling tickets for buses to Thailand, Singapore and some Malaysian destinations.

### PUTRA BUS STATION

A number of mainly east-coast services leave from this quieter and less intimidating station opposite PWTC station (easily reached by taking the LRT to PWTC, or a KTM Komuter train to Putra station).

There are services to Kota Bharu (RM40.30, eight hours, 12 daily), Kuantan (RM22.10, four hours, four daily) and Kuala Terengganu (RM40.20, seven hours, five daily).

### TERMINAL BERSEPADU SELATAN

Connected to the Bandar Tasik Selatan train station hub, about 15 minutes south of KL Sentral, is the new **Terminal Bersepadu Selatan** (☎9051 2000; [www.tbsbts.com.my](http://www.tbsbts.com.my); Bandar Tasik Selatan) serving destinations south of KL.

Among other places, there are very frequent departures to Seremban, Melaka, Muar, Johor Bahru and Singapore.

### Car

KL is the best place to hire a car for touring the peninsula. However, navigating the city's complex (and mostly one-way) traffic system is not for the timid.

All the major companies have offices at the airport. City offices, which are generally open 9am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 1pm Saturday, include the following companies:

**Avis** (☎2144 4487; [www.avis.com.my](http://www.avis.com.my); main lobby, Crowne Plaza Mutiara Kuala Lumpur, Jln Sultan Ismail)

**Hertz** (☎2148 6433; [www5.hertz.com](http://www5.hertz.com); ground fl, Kompleks Antarabangsa, Jln Sultan Ismail)

**Orix** (☎2142 3009; [www.orixauto.com.my](http://www.orixauto.com.my); 35 Jln Bukit Bintang, ground fl, Federal Hotel)

### Taxi

Long-distance taxis – often no faster than taking a bus – depart from upstairs at Pudu Sentral bus station. If you're not prepared to wait to get a full complement of four passengers, you will have to charter a whole taxi. Prices should include toll charges.

### Train

Kuala Lumpur is the hub of the **KTM** (Keretapi Tanah Melayu Berhad; ☎1300-885 862; [www.ktmb.com.my](http://www.ktmb.com.my); ☎info office 9am-9pm, ticket office 7am-10pm) national railway system. All long-distance trains depart from KL Sentral; the information office in the main hall can advise on schedules and check seat availability.

There are daily departures for Butterworth, Wakaf Bharu (for Kota Bharu and Jerantut), Johor Bahru, Thailand and Singapore; fares are cheap, especially if you opt for a seat rather than a berth (for which there are extra charges), but

## FIXED FARES FOR WHOLE TAXI

DESTINATION	FARE (RM)
Cameron Highlands (Tanah Rata)	350
Fraser's Hill	180
Genting Highlands	60
Ipoh	240
Johor Bahru	380
Lumut	350
Melaka	150
Penang	500

## TRAIN FARES FROM KUALA LUMPUR

DESTINATION	PREMIER (RM)	SUPERIOR (RM)	ECONOMY (RM)
Butterworth		34	
Ipoh		22	12
Jerantut		29	17
Johor Bahru	64	33	
Kuala Lipis		33	20
Padang Besar		44	24
Seremban	58	13	9
Singapore	68	34	
Taiping		28	18
Tampin	50	17	11
Tapah Rd		19	10
Tumpat		43	31
Wakaf Baharu		42	30

journey times are slow. KTM Komuter trains also link KL with the Klang Valley and Seremban.

### **i** Getting Around

KL Sentral is the hub of a rail-based urban network consisting of the KTM Komuter, KLIA Ekspres, KLIA Transit, LRT and Monorail systems. Unfortunately the systems – all built separately – remain largely unintegrated. Different tickets generally apply for each service, and at stations where there's an interchange between the services they're rarely conveniently connected. This said, you can happily get around much of central KL on a combination of rail and monorail services, thus avoiding the traffic jams that plague the inner-city roads.

### To/From the Airports

#### KLIA

The fastest way of reaching KL from KLIA is on the **KLIA Ekspres** ([www.kliaekspres.com](http://www.kliaekspres.com); adult/child one way RM35/15, return RM70/30, with departures every 15 minutes between 5am and 1am, 28 minutes). From KL Sentral you can continue to your destination by KTM Komuter, LRT, Monorail or taxi.

The **KL Transit train** (adult/child one way RM35/15) also connects KLIA with KL Sentral (35 minutes), but stops at three other stations en route (Salak Tinggi, Putrajaya and Cyberjaya, and Bandar Tasik Selatan).

If flying from KL on Malaysia Airlines, Cathay Pacific, Royal Brunei or Emirates you can check your baggage in at KL Sentral before making your way to KLIA.

The **Airport Coach** ([www.airportcoach.com.my](http://www.airportcoach.com.my); one way/return RM10/18) takes an hour to KL Sentral; for RM18, however, it will also take you to any central KL hotel from KLIA and pick you up for the return journey for RM25. The bus stand is clearly signposted inside the terminal.

**Taxis** from KLIA operate on a fixed-fare coupon system. Standard taxis cost RM75 (up to three people), premier taxis for four people cost RM103, and family-sized minivans seating up to eight cost RM200. The journey will take around one hour. Buy your taxi coupon before you exit the arrivals hall to avoid the aggressive pirate taxis that hassle you to pay a few hundred ringgit for the same ride. Going to the airport by taxi, make sure that the agreed fare includes tolls; expect to pay at least RM65 from Chinatown or Jln Bukit Bintang.

If you're changing to a flight on AirAsia, there's a **shuttle bus** (RM3, every 20 minutes) between KLIA and the LCCT. Penny-pinchers can use this bus to get to Nilai (RM3.50) to connect with the KTM Komuter train to KL Sentral (RM4.70). A taxi between the two airports costs RM42.

#### LCCT

**Skybus** ([www.skybus.com.my](http://www.skybus.com.my); one way RM9) and **Aerobus** (adult/child one way RM8/4) services depart at least every 15 minutes from 4.30am to 12.45am. Travelling from the LCCT, prepaid taxis charge RM70 to Chinatown or Jln Bukit Bintang (50% more from midnight to 6am). Buy your coupon at the desk near the arrival hall exit. A taxi from the city to LCCT will cost around RM65.

## KLIA TRANSIT HOTELS

If all you need to do is freshen up before or after your flight, you might find the **Airside Transit Hotel** (☎8787 4848; [www.klairporthotel.com/airside-transit-hotel](http://www.klairporthotel.com/airside-transit-hotel); Gate 5, Satellite Bldg, KLIA; d per 6hr RM185; ⚡@) useful. The hotel includes a fitness centre, business centre, spa and sauna, and all rooms come with attached bathroom and TV.

The budget **Tune Hotel** ([www.tunehotels.com](http://www.tunehotels.com)) has a branch next to the LCCT, while the luxurious **Pan Pacific KLIA** (☎8787 3333; [www.panpacific.com](http://www.panpacific.com); r from RM500; ⚡@) is linked by a bridge to the main KLIA terminal.

## SKYPARK SUBANG TERMINAL

As long as there's no traffic, a taxi from Subang to the city should take about 20 minutes and cost RM40.

## Bus

Most buses are provided by either **Rapid KL** (☎7885 2585; [www.rapidkl.com.my](http://www.rapidkl.com.my)) or **Metrobus** (☎5635 3070). There's an **information booth** (☎7am-9pm) near Pasir Seni station in Chinatown.

Rapid KL buses are the easiest to use as destinations are clearly displayed. They are divided into four classes, and tickets are valid all day on the same class of bus. Bas Bandar (routes starting with B, RM2) services run around the city centre. Bas Utama (routes starting with U, RM3) buses run from the centre to the suburbs. Bas Tempatan (routes starting with T, RM1) buses run around the suburbs. Bas Ekspres (routes starting with E, RM4) are express buses to distant suburbs.

Local buses leave from half a dozen small bus stands around the city – useful stops in Chinatown include Jln Sultan Mohamed (by Pasar Seni), Bangkok Bank (on Lebuhr Pudu) and Medan Pasar (on Lebuhr Ampang).

## KL Monorail

The air-conditioned **monorail** ([www.myrapid.com.my](http://www.myrapid.com.my); RM1.20-2.50; ☎6am-midnight) runs between KL Sentral in the south to Titiwangsa in the north, linking up many of the city's sightseeing areas.

## KTM Komuter Trains

**KTM Komuter** (☎1300-885 862; <http://ktmkomuter.com.my>; ☎6am-11.45pm) train services run every 15 to 20 minutes and use KL Sentral as a hub. There are two lines: Tanjung Malim to Sungai Gadut and Batu Caves to Pelabuhan Klang. Useful stops include Batu Caves, Mid Valley (for the Mid Valley Megamall), Subang Jaya (for Sunway Lagoon), Nilai (for the cheap local bus to the airports), Klang, Pelabuhan Klang (for ferry services to Sumatra) and Seremban. Trains run every 15 to 20 minutes from approximately 6am to 11.45pm. Tickets start from RM1 for one stop.

## Light Rail Transit (LRT)

In addition to the buses, **Rapid KL** (☎7885 2585; [www.rapidkl.com.my](http://www.rapidkl.com.my)) runs the Light Rail Transit (LRT) system. There are three lines: Ampang/Sentul Timur, Sri Petaling/Sentul Timur and Kelana Jaya/Terminal Putra. The network is poorly integrated because the lines were constructed by different companies. As a result, you sometimes have to buy a new ticket to change from one line to another, and you may also have to follow a series of walkways, stairs and elevators, or walk several blocks down the street.

An electronic control system checks tickets as you enter and exit via turnstiles. Single-journey fares range from RM1 to RM2.80. You can buy tickets from the cashier or electronic ticket

## MYRAPID & TOUCH 'N GO CARDS

You may find one of these electronic credit storage cards useful if you plan to stay for an extended period in KL or Malaysia. The prepaid **MyRapid** ([www.myrapid.com.my](http://www.myrapid.com.my)) card is valid on Rapid KL buses, the monorail and the Ampang and Kelana Jaya LRT lines. It costs RM10 (including RM8 in credit) and can be bought at monorail and LRT stations. Just tap at the ticket gates or when you get on the bus and the correct fare will be deducted. Rapid KL also offers the **Rapidpass Flexi Touch 'n Go**, valid from one to 30 days (RM10 to RM150).

The **Touch 'n Go card** ([www.touchngo.com.my](http://www.touchngo.com.my)) can be used on all public transport in the Klang Valley, at highway toll booths across the country and at selected parking sites. The cards, which cost RM10 and can be reloaded with values from RM20 to RM500, can be purchased at KL Sentral and the central LRT stations KLCC, Masjid Jamek and Dang Wangi.



# KLANG VALLEY RAIL TRANSIT MAP



machines. Trains run every six to 10 minutes from 6am to 11.45pm. If you're going to be in KL for a while, consider getting one of the credit storage cards.

### Taxi

KL has plenty of air-conditioned taxis, which queue up at designated taxi stops across the city. You can also flag down moving taxis, but drivers will only stop if there is a convenient place to pull over. Fares start at RM3 for the first two minutes, with an additional 20 sen for each 45 seconds. From midnight to 6am there's a surcharge of 50% on the metered fare, and extra passengers (more than two) are charged 20 sen each. Luggage placed in the boot is an extra RM1 and there's an RM12 surcharge for taxis to KLIA.

Some drivers have a limited geographical knowledge of the city and some also refuse to use the meter, even though this is a legal requirement. Taxi drivers lingering outside luxury hotels or tourist hot spots such as KL Bird Park are especially guilty of this behaviour. Note that KL Sentral and some large malls such as Pavilion and Suria KLCC have a coupon system for taxis where you pay in advance at a slightly higher fee than the meter.

If a driver demands a fixed fare, bargain hard, or walk away and find another taxi. As a guide, you can get right across the centre of town for RM10 on the meter even in moderate traffic. Always ask for a receipt and check to see that they haven't included spurious extra charges, such as for baggage you don't have.

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